

# THE STORY OF SOMERVILLE

BY M. A. HALEY

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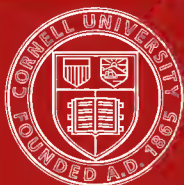
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THE OLD POWDER HOUSE.







# THE STORY OF SOMERVILLE

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By M. A. HALEY



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## PREFACE

THE STORY OF SOMERVILLE is not intended to be a comprehensive or a detailed history of Somerville. It is composed of a few facts and incidents, written with affectionate interest, in the hope that those who read it may love our city, and feel a just pride in its past and present, and bright anticipations for its future.

Thanks are due to Mr. Charles D. Elliot for historical data and revisions; to Mr. Charles C. Farrington for facts and helpful suggestions; to Mr. William H. Hills for valuable assistance in literary methods; to Mr. William E. Brigham for an account of the Brigham family, and to the *Somerville Journal* for the use of cuts for illustration.

The authorities consulted in this work are: Drake's "Old Landmarks of Middlesex County," Drake's "History of Middlesex

County," Frothingham's "History of Charlestown," "The Memorial History of Boston," "Somerville Past and Present," Potter's "History of Narragansett," and the Reports of the School Committee, from 1812 to the present time.

M. A. H.

June, 1903.

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# The Story of Somerville

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## I

### THE BEGINNING

NOT many years ago a queer little girl lived in Boston, and like all Boston girls she liked the study of history. Her teachers gave her the history of the United States. After she read it she said: "This is not the beginning." Then they gave her English history. When she finished that she said: "This is not the beginning." "Well, then you must go back to the Garden of Eden."

In our story of Somerville we shall go back farther than the Garden of Eden, back to the time when the earth was too cold to have a

garden. There was an age when "the earth was without form and void." The surface gradually hardened, and after centuries a coat of ice covered the greater part of it. The same little girl one day made a visit to Tufts College and there she saw a large flat stone covered with fine parallel lines. She asked how the stone happened to be marked in that peculiar way, and one of the professors told her that the scratches were made by the stones embedded in a slowly moving ice-river coming from the Arctic regions. After hundreds of years the ice melted, and left these stones all over the country. It was a long time before the ice-cap melted, and the climate slowly changed, and the land on which we now live became suitable for the habitation of man.

We think different races lived here, but we know very little about any of them, except the Indians.

"The English nation by right of prior discovery acquired possession of a large extent of land in North America. The Government gave this land to those of its citizens who were ven-



turous enough to undertake the settlement of an almost unexplored wilderness. Priority of discovery gave them no right over the independent natives, or to the soil until they had fairly acquired it of its possessors.”<sup>1</sup>

In April, 1606, King James I. divided the country in America, claimed by England, into two portions. The south half he allotted to a London company, the north to a company established at Plymouth, in the west of England, and called, in 1620, the Council of Plymouth. The north part, as regranted in 1620, included the land between  $40^{\circ}$  —  $48^{\circ}$ , north latitude, and from ocean to ocean.

In 1614, John Smith sailed up the Charles River. He saw about three thousand straight-haired, copper-colored Indians, called Aberginians. These Indians called their homes Mishawum. Their chief business was war, but the New England Indians were civilized enough to plant corn-fields and build villages. “These villages could be built in a day and removed in an hour.”<sup>2</sup>

Captain Smith made a map of the neighbor-

hood, and the Prince of Wales, afterward Charles I. of England, looked over this map and gave English names to many points on the New England coast. "Only three of his names have held their original places on our shore. They are Plymouth, Cape Ann, and Charles River." <sup>3</sup>

Smith's map was the first on which the name of New England appeared.

In March, 1628, the Plymouth Council gave a grant of land, including the territory of Somerville, to the Massachusetts Bay Company.

In the same year a party of settlers from Salem came to a place, on the north side of the Charles River, full of Indians. They settled here, and built several houses, one of which was the Great House. Others soon followed. They called the place Charlestown, from the river. Charlestown included the peninsula, the isthmus, and the mainland beyond.

In the early records the peninsula is mentioned as the "Neck," and the mainland as "Without the Neck."

"In the following year a hundred settlers

began to build a town. Sagamore, the good and gentle Indian, gave them his free consent to form a settlement.”<sup>4</sup>

“The two Indian nations that owned this land were the Massachusetts and the Pawtuckets. The great sachem of the Pawtuckets was Nanepashemet, or the New Moon. He was killed in 1619, on the banks of the Mystic River, by the Tarrantines, who were the enemies of the Massachusetts Indians. Squa-Sachem, his widow, continued the government. She afterward married Webcowit, the priest of the tribe.”<sup>5</sup>

In 1639, Squaw-Sachem and Webcowit deeded to Charlestown the territory now called Somerville, for twenty-one coats, three bushels of corn, and nineteen fathoms of wampum. This deed is recorded in the Middlesex records and in the town records.

In buying land in those times, according to an old English custom, the owner and the purchaser met upon the ground, and an actual bit of turf and a twig from a tree were given to the purchasers, in token that the purchase was complete. Sales “by turf and by twig”

were common in those days, and Somerville was perhaps bought with this form.

“Wampum is the kind of money that the Indians used in trading with the whites and with each other. This money was made from the purple and white parts of the quahaug shell; round, about a sixteenth of an inch thick, and a quarter of an inch in diameter, with a hole in the middle for stringing on strings of bark or hemp, the purple and white alternating on the string. The purple was of double the value of the white, and the whole was valued at five shillings per fathom.”<sup>6</sup> The colored pieces were sometimes taken from the periwinkle. Strings of this wampum may be seen in Pilgrim Hall in Plymouth.

A fathom is six feet in length.

Among the early visitors to Somerville was Miles Standish.

“The Memorial History of Boston” says: “On the afternoon of Wednesday, the twenty-ninth of September, 1621, a large open sail-boat, or shallop, as it was then called, entered Boston Harbor, coming up along the shore from

the direction of Plymouth. In it were thirteen men, — ten Europeans, with three savages acting as their guides. The whole party was under the immediate command of Captain Miles Standish, and their purpose was to explore the country in and about Massachusetts Bay. Early the next morning the party made ready to extend their explorations to the mainland. The Sachem Obbatinewat then undertook to guide the party to Squaw Sachem, who lived somewhere on the Mystic. The party did not reach her home. They landed and explored the country in the neighborhood of Medford, found Nanepashemet's deserted wigwam, and a palisade enclosure within which he was buried, and bought some skins from some Indian women, but were obliged to return without having made a treaty with any one save Obbatinewat, who was equally afraid of the Squaw Sachem and the Tarrantines."

## II

### EARLY SETTLERS

AMONG the early settlers of our town were John Woolrich, — an Indian trader who built a house and fenced in a small portion of land about a mile and a half from Charlestown Neck, probably in the vicinity of Dane Street, — Richard Palsgrave, the first physician in Charlestown, and Edward Jones.

Rev. Abner Morse, in his "Brigham Genealogy," claims Somerville as the residence of Thomas Brigham, the Puritan. He says: "In 1648, there were laid out to him seventy-two acres 'on the rocks' upon the Charlestown line. In 1648, he bought of William Hamlet ten acres in Fresh Pond meadow, on the northeast side of the great swamp. Of these he took immediate possession, and built upon the former. By the help of Peter B. Brigham, Esq.,

of Boston, the rocks have been found, and the place of his lost habitation has been identified. It is now in Somerville, about one-third of a mile south of Tufts College and one hundred rods east of Cambridge Poor House. On the southwest side of it is an uplift of clay slate, about seventy feet in height, overlooking Fresh Pond, one and one-half miles at the south. A few rods southwest of this there is another uplift, of the same formation and of about the same size and altitude, but the rock does not, as in the former, crop out. Yet it was doubtless one of 'the rocks' which constituted a well-known ancient landmark. For Thomas Danforth, as if connected with Thomas Brigham, immediately after the above assignment, purchased of Nicholas Wyeth forty-eight acres 'upon the rocks near Alewife meadow, having Thomas Brigham on the north.' This lot must have included the site of the Poor House, and probably the southwest rock, and by its boundaries it contributes to the identification of Brigham's location, which had been ascertained from other evidence.

“Here lived Thomas Brigham, contented with his portion of good things, with which the millionaire is not. Here he read his Bible and communed with his Redeemer. Here he interceded for his race, completed his victory, and left for his coronation. Hallowed be the place! Hallowed be his memory! Here let his children assemble, to praise and to pray, to know and be known, and build up a friendship as enduring as ‘the rocks.’ ”

It should be said that while Mr. Morse believes that Thomas Brigham lived in Somerville, other authorities say that he lived just across the line in Cambridge.

John Winthrop, the first Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony who came to America, was granted the Ten Hills Farm in 1631. It extended from Cradock Bridge, near Medford Centre, along the Mystic River, nearly to Convent Hill, and included all the land between Broadway, as far as the Powder House on the south and the river on the north.

“This was the Governor’s Farm, where he lived, built, planted, raised cattle, and launched



the first ship in Massachusetts, *The Blessing of the Bay*, July 4, 1631." 7

*The Blessing of the Bay* was built for trading purposes, but soon after its launching it was armed, and was used as a patrol boat for the New England coast. Hence it is regarded as the beginning of our American navy.

To show how lonely the place was at that time, the story is frequently told of Governor Winthrop's losing his way in the woods only a half-mile from his home. "He wandered about till, darkness coming on, he spent the night walking about and singing psalms, for he did not dare to go to sleep, for fear of wild beasts."

Wild beasts were indeed plenty, for different travellers have mentioned lions, bears, moose, deer, porcupine, and raccoons.

Ten Hills Farm became after a while the Governor's summer residence only. His friend, Mr. Blackstone, persuaded him to spend his winters in Boston, because there he could find a spring of pure water.

It is nearly three hundred years since then, and some of the people of Boston have recently

tried to induce the authorities to open for public use the old spring that furnished Governor Winthrop with pure water. The Old South Meeting-house stands on what was the Governor's lawn.

The house at Ten Hills Farm in which Captain Robert Temple lived is thus described: "The mansion has a spacious hall and generous provision of large square rooms. As you ascend the stairs in front of you, at the first landing is a glass door, opening into a snug little apartment which overlooks the river. The wainscoting and woodwork were in good condition in 1877" — the year in which the old mansion was torn down.

At the death of Governor Winthrop, in 1649, the property descended to his son, John, the Governor of Connecticut.

In 1686, the Royal Charter was suspended, and it was announced that all lands reverted to the Crown, and that the owners must take out "patents of confirmation" from the new government. The pastures were seized, and given to the supporters of Governor Andros.

Many farms were taken from their owners and given to the friends of the new Governor. Ten Hills, however, had already become the property of a family named Lidgett, friends of Andros. A portion of it afterward was sold to Sir Isaac Royall. Five hundred and four acres of it are in Medford. The remainder, which is in Somerville, two hundred and fifty-one acres, was sold to Captain Robert Temple. After this it passed through several hands, till it became the property of Colonel Samuel Jaques.

All the owners of Ten Hills Farm have been governors, or relatives of governors, including the present owners of the land, the heirs of Governor Ames.

“Colonel Jaques was in habits and manners the type of the English country gentleman. At Somerville he had a deer park and a pack of hounds. He often wakened the echoes of the neighboring hills with the note of his bugle or the cry of his pack.”

The Governor's house was perhaps a mansion, but most of the “houses were built of hewn

logs, with mortar made of mud and sand, and covered on top by beams and rafters, on which was fastened a thatching of reeds and boughs. This thatching was apt to catch fire from sparks flying out of the chimney.”<sup>8</sup> So dangerous was this mode of roofing that in 1633 it was agreed that all houses should be covered with slate or shingles, instead of thatch.

Governor Winthrop was not contented with his large farm “on the Mistick,” for in the early records we read that “April 3, 1632, the island [in Boston Harbor] called Conant’s Island, with all the liberties and privileges of fishing & fowleing, was devised to John Winthrop, Esq., the p’sent Gov’n, for the terme of his life for the ffine of fforty shillings.”

The Governor was also required to plant an orchard and a vineyard there, and the island became known as the Governor’s garden.

In 1640, the title of the island was conveyed to the Winthrops, on condition of their paying two bushels of apples a year to the governor and the General Court. In 1696, a fort was built on it; it was afterward rebuilt and is now called

Fort Winthrop. This is the island on which a powder-magazine exploded September 7, 1902, and in the explosion two citizens from Somerville lost their lives.

### III

## THE HILLS OF SOMERVILLE

THE hills of Somerville were:—

Convent Hill, or Mount Benedict, on the north side of Broadway, near Franklin Street. It is sometimes called Ploughed Hill, because the custom was to plough it, in a circle around the hill, turning the furrows always down the slope. This hill has been recently levelled, and the land has been laid out in lots.

Asylum Hill, sometimes called Miller's Hill, or Cobble Hill, was situated in the southern part of the present city. It was bounded in later years on two sides by the Boston and Lowell railroad, and on the other two sides by the Fitchburg and the Grand Junction railroads.

Winthrop Hill was on the Ten Hills Farm. Very little of the hill remains.

Winter Hill, the summit of which is on Broadway, near Central Street, has changed very little in shape and height. The origin of the name is unknown.

Walnut Tree Hill, now College Hill, is unchanged. From its summit twenty-two cities and towns are plainly visible.

Wild Cat Hill was on the border of Alewife Brook. It is easy to divine the origin of this name.

Quarry Hill is the site of the Old Powder House.

Strawberry Hill is mentioned once in the old records. It is supposed to be the high land near Kent Street.<sup>9</sup> Professor Charles Eliot Norton's grove, just over the Cambridge line, is a part of it, and the part in Somerville was cut away in the construction of Beacon Street.

Central Hill is the site of the high schools. This land is called Middle Hill on some of the old maps of Revolutionary times.

Prospect Hill, on the east of Walnut Street,

has been cut down to fill Miller's River. The city has taken the land for a public park, and on the summit is being erected a lofty tower, which shall be a memorial of the historic events connected with the hill.

“From Charlestown Neck the marshes extended to the shores of Miller's and Mystic Rivers, and from the foot of Prospect Hill to the foot of Convent and Winter Hills. Asylum Hill was a peninsula at high tide. Several creeks and brooks flowed from the higher land across these marshes to the river. Chief of these was Miller's River, named after Thomas Miller, who lived near it. This stream had its beginning in Cambridge, near Kirkland Street. A branch of Miller's River began its course on Highland Avenue, near Spring Hill Terrace, crossing Central Street near Cambria, and School Street near Summer Street, joining the main stream not far from Union Square.”<sup>10</sup>

In later years Miller's River became a very unpleasant stream, and by order of the city



authorities it was filled with the earth taken from Prospect Hill.

Alewife Brook, our western boundary, then called by its Indian name, Menotomy River, is the outlet of Fresh Pond. It empties into Mystic River.

The northerly side of Highland Avenue, between Albion, Lowell, and Central Streets, was once a bit of marsh called Polly Swamp. Here started a small stream, called Winthrop Brook. It flowed northeasterly, crossing Broadway, near the railroad bridge and Medford Street, in Medford, finding its way to the Mystic River.

Farther on was Two-Penny Brook, probably so called on account of its insignificance. It rose on Broadway, opposite the Simpson estate, and flowed through the college estate, under the Lowell railroad, to the river.

“The main highways were laid out as early as 1630. The first road in Somerville was Washington Street, extending from the Neck to Cambridge. The next was the easterly part of Broadway, called the road to Mystic, connecting as early as 1637 by trail over, or

around, Ten Hills Farm, with the ford and bridge then built at Medford Centre.

“Broadway was extended many years later, over Winter Hill to Menotomy, or, as it is now called, Arlington.

“Middle, or Barberry Lane, now Avon Place, ran from Cross Street into what is now Highland Avenue. At School Street it turned northerly ten rods, then continued westerly and ended in Central Street.”<sup>11</sup>

The first inhabitants built on Town Hill, near Charlestown City Square. They had little gardens near their homes, but the grazing ground for their cattle was Somerville, which was called “Cow Commons” and later “The Stinted Common.” It remained a cow pasture till 1685.

“As early as 1632, a herdsman had charge of the cows. He blew his horn from Town Hill every morning, from April to October, to collect the herd and to drive them to the best places on the Common. His salary for the year was fifty bushels of Indian corn.”

In 1685, the Stinted Common was divided

into strips a fourth of a mile wide with numbered rangeways between them.

The first rangeway is now Franklin Street; the second, Cross Street; the third, Walnut; the fourth, School; the fifth, Central; the sixth, Lowell; the seventh, Cedar; and the eighth, Willow Avenue. There were three others, running from Broadway, beyond Elm Street, into Medford. The land between these highways was cut up into farms. East Somerville was a large farming tract. These rangeways were originally two rods wide, but the one corresponding to Cross Street was three rods wide, and therefore was called "Three-Pole Lane." (The old arithmetics used to teach, "sixteen and one-half feet make one rod, perch, or pole.")

Central Street has been called Rand's Lane; Lowell Street, White Street; Willow Avenue, Irving Street.

The territory thus laid out extended from Washington Street, Bow Street, and Somerville Avenue to Broadway, and from the present Charlestown line to Elm Street.

One of the early writers, speaking of this part of the country, says:—

“It is very beautiful in open lands, mixed with goodly woods, and again open plains, in some places five hundred acres; some more, some less, not much troublesome for to clear, or for the plough to go in; no place barren but on the tops of the hills. The grass and weeds grow up to a man’s face on the lowlands, and by fresh rivers abundance of grass, and large meadows, without any tree or shrub to hinder the scythe.”

## IV

### EARLY CUSTOMS

THE colonists had many customs that may seem very peculiar in our day.

The Town Messenger watched all visitors, and gave notice to the Selectmen of their names, whence they came, and where they lodged.

“The night-watch with great-coats, dark lanterns, and iron-shod staffs went their rounds, to warn all wayfarers to their beds, admonish the people who might chance to be abroad, or arrest evil doers.”

The watchman had an ancient custom of crying, “All’s well!” and the hour of the night, as he went his rounds, at the same time striking his staff upon the pavement.

Doctor Bentley, of Salem, inquired through

a newspaper if it would not be better "to cry out when all was *not* well and to let well enough alone." <sup>12</sup>

In the meeting-house the women and men sat in separate seats. Clocks must have been scarce in those days, for the Town Messenger stood near the pulpit and turned the hour-glass to determine the length of the service.

They had some very curious laws, too.

"If men took tobacco publicly, or privately in their homes before acquaintances or strangers, they were obliged to pay a fine. Young women were not allowed to wear short sleeves, or very wide ones. For profanity, one man had his tongue put into a cleft stick and kept there for half an hour. Church bells used to ring at five in the morning and at eight in the evening, and people were obliged by law to be in their houses at nine." <sup>13</sup>

The hour must have been changed afterward, for in many old towns in New England, the church bells are rung at nine o'clock in the evening, and at noon.

For wrong-doing the same punishments that

were customary in England\* were used here: The Stock, the Gag, and the Ducking-Stool. The Stool was a chair, into which the victim was fastened, being then dipped three times in some convenient place of fresh, or salt, water, as the Judge decided. The Stocks stood in the Market Place. The prisoner sat here, exposed to the public view, with hands and feet fastened in an uncomfortable position.

The most common method of travelling was on horseback, or by stage-coach.

The wealthy families owned one or more slaves. In 1678, a vessel brought about fifty into Boston, mostly women and children, who were sold at prices varying from \$50 to \$100 each.<sup>14</sup>

The first general post-office was established in 1710.

All kinds of business and trades flourished here. In 1645, a mill was built at Charlestown Neck, opposite Miller's River. Among the various trades carried on here between 1630 and 1650 were: Farming; fishing; coopering; tile making; brewing; rope and anchor making;

charcoal burning; the manufacture of salt; and various kinds of mill work.

A Town government was very early organized and local laws were enacted. The Town officers were the "Seven men, or Selectmen, Constables, Highway Surveyors, Town Clerk, Herdsman, Overseers of the Fields, and Chimney Sweepers." <sup>15</sup>

Every house had to be provided with ladders as a precaution against fire. Coal mines had not been discovered in this country at that time, and wood was the chief fuel. This caused a great deal of soot, which was apt to settle on the inside of the chimneys, and was very inflammable. For this reason the law required the chimneys to be swept once a month in winter, and once in two months in summer. As the chimneys were often narrow, little boys were employed to get inside of them and sweep out the soot.

"In 1633, the town gave liberty to any of its inhabitants to build outside the Neck, and in 1634, ten persons were granted 'planting-ground' on the south side of New Towne High-



way. New Towne Highway was the road to Cambridge, or Washington Street.”<sup>16</sup>

“In 1643, the Colony of Massachusetts Bay was divided into four shires, or counties, of which Middlesex, named after that county in England which includes London, was one.

“It is the most populous [1873] of all the counties of the Old Bay State, and embraces within its limits the earliest battlefields of the Revolution, the first seat of learning in the English colonies, and the manufactures which have made American industry known in every quarter of the globe.”<sup>17</sup>

Very few people know anything about the old canal, which was once the great water road between Boston and the falls of the Merrimac.

The remains of the Middlesex Canal can be seen [1903] in the towns of Medford and Woburn, and some portions probably exist just north of Mystic Avenue, near the Charlestown line.

In 1793, the construction of the canal was begun, but it was not wholly finished till 1804.

Its starting-place in Boston was in the vicinity of Haymarket Square.

When the railroad between Boston and Lowell was built, and trains could cross in an hour the distance for which the canal-boats required twelve hours, the usefulness of the canal was over, and it was finally abandoned.

## V

### THE POWDER HOUSE

ONE of the ancient landmarks in Massachusetts is the Powder House. It ornaments the heading of our local newspaper, and is an important feature in the badge of the Heptorean Club. It stands on a little hill near the old quarry, close to the road leading from Winter Hill to Arlington.

“For solitary picturesqueness, in all New England, only the Old Mill in Newport can rival it. Long before you reach the spot its venerable aspect rivets the attention. Its novel structure, its solid masonry, no less than the extraordinary contrast with everything around it, stamp it as the handiwork of a generation long since forgotten.”<sup>18</sup>

The hill on which the Old Powder House

stands was awarded to Sergeant Richard Lowden, about nine or ten acres in all. After his death the estate was sold in 1703-4 to Jonathan Foskett, who sold it to Jean Mallet, a shipwright, afterward a miller, who probably built the curious old mill. Mallet died in 1722-3, and he left the property to his son, Michael, who, in 1747, sold it to the State for a powder magazine.

“The walls of the mill are two feet thick, with an inner structure of brick, the outside of which is encased in a shell of blue stone, quarried probably near by. Within, it had three stages, or lofts, supported by oaken beams of great thickness, with about six feet of clear space between. The edifice is about thirty feet high, with a diameter of fifteen feet at its base.”<sup>19</sup>

The view from the southwest door is a most charming one. Near the mill stood the farmhouse, where the miller dwelt. The farmers for many miles around sent their corn to be ground at this mill.

The Powder House is connected with one of

the first hostile acts by General Gage in the Revolutionary War, namely, the seizure of the powder belonging to the Province. The Major-General of the Massachusetts militia, William Brattle, suggested to General Gage that it would be well to gain possession of the powder stored in the old mill. About half-past four on the morning of September 1, 1774, two hundred and sixty soldiers, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Madison, embarked from Long Wharf, in Boston, in thirteen boats, sailed up the Mystic River, landed at Ten Hills Farm, marched to the Powder House, and removed all the powder in it. Some authorities say that it contained two hundred and fifty half-barrels, others that it had two hundred and twelve half-barrels. The powder was conveyed to Castle Island.

When the Province bought the Old Mill, only a quarter of an acre of land belonged to it. More than seventy years ago it was sold to Nathan Tufts. His children gave it, and sixty-five thousand feet of land, to the City of Somerville, in 1890. The City purchased sev-

eral thousand feet additional, and it is now a delightful park.

We may imagine the Revolutionary heroes visiting this mill and listening to the legend connected with it.

One dark evening, the miller heard the trampling of a horse near the door, and a faint voice crying "Halloo!" He rushed to the door, and saw a boy on horseback. The lad seemed weary, and the horse looked as if it had been driven very hard. It was not uncommon for farmers to give rest and shelter to belated travellers, so the miller kindly invited the boy to come in. He gave him a seat at the table where the family were at supper. The boy, however, had no appetite, and, after tasting a few mouthfuls, shrank into a corner near the fire.

When supper was over and the farmer's wife sat down with her knitting, she tried to discover something about the boy's home, but he answered reluctantly and seemed very stupid.

Soon bedtime came, and the farmer told the stranger to go up-stairs with his oldest son and

share his room, but the boy implored the farmer to let him sit by the fire, unless he could have a room to himself. The farmer was angry, and thought the boy might have bad companions who wished to rob the family, so he told him if he felt too proud to sleep with any one he might sleep in the mill with the rats. The boy cagerly accepted the proposal, and the miller, carrying a lantern through the darkness and the mist, led the way. The youth climbed up the ladder to the first stage. The miller locked the door, and hurried away. The boy looked about him in the gloom and shivered. When he heard the rats rushing over the floor he burst into tears. Kneeling on the floor, he prayed for help and protection, and then, stretching himself on the hard boards, he sobbed till he fell asleep.

In the middle of the night he was awakened by the clanking of keys and the sound of voices.

He seemed frantic at the sound. He hastily drew up the ladder by which he had ascended, and climbed to the upper loft. Soon the miller appeared below, with a lantern. With him was

another man. "Come down, Josephine," he called, "and I'll forgive you for running away. I'll promise not to touch you."

Josephine crept into the darkest corner and remained motionless.

"Bring another ladder!" screamed the enraged stranger, "and I'll bring her down, or break her neck for the chase she has led me!"

With the help of another ladder, he climbed to the loft. He groped about to find the girl, but, unused to the place, and with so dim a light, he could scarcely see; but he could hear her creeping away from him, and he tried to seize her. He missed her, and fell against the edge of the opening. In his fright he grasped the rope that set the mill wheels in motion.

"Let go the cord!" cried the miller, "or you are a dead man!"

It was too late. The wheels could not be stopped in an instant, and when they were at rest, the man was taken out, injured beyond recovery.

Josephine was an Acadian girl who had been entrusted to his care by the Government. He



beat her, and treated her cruelly in many ways. When she could endure her suffering no longer, she disguised herself as a boy and ran away from him. As she was bound to him by law till she was of age, no one could take her away from him, or give her help if it were known who she was.

Before noon the man died. The girl, who had no parents or near relatives, found a happy home with the miller and his wife.

Such is the legend of the Powder House, as it has come down to us. It is based, however, on tradition, and not on historical authority.

## VI

### TROUBLE WITH ENGLAND

THE rivers flowed peacefully to the sea. Fields of waving corn and golden grain lay in the autumnal sunshine. Rosy apples gleamed amid the green leaves in the orchard, and yellow pumpkins brightened the hillsides. The hardy, happy farmers, laboring in the fields, gathered the fruit, vegetables, and grain, looking forward to a winter of plenty and rest. Suddenly rumors filled the air. Men gathered in groups, to discuss the situation. Some talked of war, others counselled peace and submission to the mother country.

This trouble had not been wholly unexpected. Some of the laws passed by Great Britain had been very oppressive, and the long-suffering people determined not to submit to them. Many of the colonists sided with the British

government. They were called Tories. Members of the opposing party were usually called Americans, sometimes Yankees.

The several towns had been quietly collecting arms and ammunition for a contest which all hoped would never take place.

September 1, 1774, the powder was removed from the Powder House in Somerville, by the command of General Gage, and this act was the signal for a general revolt.

“ Fifty thousand ‘ well-armed ’ men had responded to this alarm ; ‘ the whole country was in arms ’ ; they came not only from Middlesex and the adjacent counties, but from the western part of the State, and even from Connecticut.” <sup>20</sup>

The King’s officers were astonished and troubled at the turn of events. They endeavored to allay the excitement of the people, and to pacify them ; they said they were sorry to carry out laws so offensive to the colonists, and immediately resigned their positions. The people, seeing no cause for further alarm, disbanded and returned to their homes.

## VII

### OLD HOMESTEADS

THE houses in Somerville at the time of the Revolution were as follows:—

The Locke place was on Broadway, near the Charlestown line. The residence of the late Fitch Cutter was opposite. His house was moved to the corner of Sycamore and Forster Streets, where it now [1903] stands. There was a house on the southwest corner of Cross Street and one on the northeast corner of Temple Street. On the summit of Winter Hill stood Joseph Tufts's house, now moved to Lowell Street. Daniel Tufts lived in a house which was, until recently, a part of the mansion on the north side of Broadway, opposite the Powder Magazine. The home of Oliver Tufts was owned and occupied by John Tufts.

David Wood had a country house on Three-Pole Lane, near the northeast corner of Pearl Street. On the road from Charlestown to Cambridge was the house of Joseph Miller, on the eastern corner of Franklin Street. It is still standing.

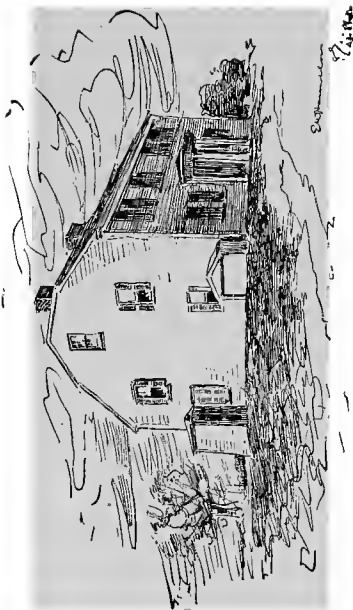
The second story of Mr. William Walker's house was one of the old dwellings. Fifty yards east of Mystic Street is the house where Mrs. Debby Shedd lived. It is still standing. There was a house on the southeast corner of Prospect Street. Pythian Block occupies the site of Ben Piper's Tavern. Samuel Choate's house was on the western side of Bow Street.

Samuel Tufts occupied the old homestead still standing on the west side of Somerville Avenue, near Laurel Street. The widow Rand lived on the northeast corner of Central Street.

Samuel Kent lived in the low hip-roofed house now standing at the corner of Garden Court.

Near Willow Avenue is the residence of Timothy Tufts. "The house stands unchanged, though more than a hundred years old, and is still occupied by a Timothy Tufts." <sup>21</sup>

The John Tufts house on Sycamore Street stood on the edge of the road. It has recently been moved back a few feet, and a porch and steps have been added to the front entrance. It is now leased to the Somerville Historical Society. Meetings are held there, and many valuable souvenirs, either given, or loaned to the Society, are kept there on exhibition. The house is owned by Mrs. Annie Fletcher, the daughter of Oliver Tufts, and the wife of W. K. Fletcher, M. D.



THE JOHN TUFTS HOUSE.





## VIII

### CONCORD AND LEXINGTON

“DURING the winter of 1774-5 England passed an act forbidding the importation into the colonies of arms and munitions of war. This act caused much alarm, and the Americans began to conceal and protect the supplies already on hand. These were placed in different towns, one of which was Concord. General Gage discovered this, and determined to capture the stores, and the Americans were equally determined to prevent the capture. A company of thirty men arranged with one another to watch ‘two and two’ the movements of the British. They found out that the British intended to start April 18 for Concord, to capture the powder, and Paul Revere was sent by way of Charlestown to warn the inhabitants.”<sup>22</sup>

He left Boston about ten o'clock Tuesday night, April 18, 1775, and paddled across the bay to Charlestown, where a friend was waiting with his horse. When the signal lights in the belfry of the old North Church told of the approach of the British, Paul Revere rode swiftly to the Market Place in Charlestown, which is now City Square. Turning to the left, he went up what is now Cambridge Street, to the corner of Crescent Street, Somerville. Here he saw two men talking. They were on horseback. They were British officers. He turned his horse quickly, and galloped to Sullivan Square, Charlestown, and from there rode up Broadway to Winter Hill, over the hill into Medford. He was pursued by the horsemen. One endeavored to head him off by crossing the fields, but he fell into a clay-pit, thus enabling Revere to escape. From Medford he proceeded to Arlington, then to Lexington and beyond, where he was captured, but not till he had alarmed the country. It was on this journey that some one opened a window and reproved him for making so much noise. "Noise!"

exclaimed Revere. "You'll have enough of it before morning. The British are coming!"

"Through the gloom and the light,  
The fate of a nation was riding that night;  
And the spark struck out by that steed in his flight  
Kindled the land into flame with its heat."

"It was after eleven o'clock when Colonel Francis Smith, with eight hundred men, landed at Lechmere's Point from the boats of the men-of-war. It was a fine moonlight night. Pickets had been stationed on the road, by General Gage's order, and if Revere had not met with two of these patrols he would have been caught by the main body of troops."<sup>23</sup>

The column moved silently through Cambridge, past the old tavern on the corner of Beech Street and Massachusetts Avenue. The peaceful inhabitants were roused from their beds by the ringing of bells and beat of drum, when the Americans realized that the foe was approaching. The men arming and hastening to the scene, women crying, children weeping and clinging to their parents, — all made a scene of terror impossible to describe.

“ On the march to Concord the British troops passed through Somerville. The residents were awakened by the noise and heard them call Piper’s Tavern, which stood where Pythian Block now stands in Union Square. An old house, occupied by the Widow Smith, stood on the east side of the present Wesley Park. Here the troops halted and drank at the well, and were seen by the people living in the house. The Widow Rand, who lived on the northwest corner of Central Street, heard the tramp of men and ran in her night-clothes to the house of Samuel Tufts, who was too busy making bullets in his kitchen to attend to street noises. He saddled his horse instantly, and galloped across to Cambridge, to tell the news. Then they came to Timothy Tufts’s house on Elm Street, near Beech, stopping there for water.” <sup>24</sup>

Mr. Tufts’s dog awoke and barked. This aroused the family, and looking out they saw the moving points of eight hundred bayonets, glittering above a moving mass, disappearing into Beech Street.

Of the struggle and defeat of the Regulars

at Concord it is not necessary to speak. We all know that. "It was six in the evening when they returned, almost on a run. They came through Beech Street into Elm Street. The Americans fired upon them, and some were killed, who now lie buried in Mr. Tufts's lot, just inside the wall.

"Lord Percy, who tried at every point to check the pursuers, fired on the Americans from the northerly slope of Spring Hill. The troops continued to retreat down Elm Street and Somerville Avenue, one man being killed near Central Street, at which point a volley was fired into Mr. Rand's house.

"There was an old pond at the foot of Laurel Street, and the soldiers threw themselves into it and drank eagerly. Near Walnut Street another soldier fell. Down Washington Street they ran, passing around the foot of Prospect Hill.

"The only Somerville citizen who fell in this battle was James Miller. He, with others, was firing on the British from the slope of Prospect Hill, when the flankers surprised

them. The rest fled, but Miller, still firing, stood at his post, and when urged by his comrades to fly, answered: 'I am too old to run!'

"On the north side of Washington Street, near Mystic Street, is the house then owned by Thomas Shed. A British soldier entered it, and while rummaging a bureau was shot. This bureau, or 'high-boy' as it is called, with its bullet-holes, is now in the possession of the family of Nathan Tufts." <sup>25</sup>

The battle of Lexington ended in Somerville, and in its glory, as well as in its horror, Somerville has a share.

## IX

### BUNKER HILL

KING GEORGE wished to collect all the money he could from the Colonists. He claimed a certain part of the cargoes in their ships. If the Colonies traded with one another, there was a tax for that. If goods were brought into this country, they were taxed. If people seemed unwilling to pay, soldiers were sent to live in their houses until they were glad to pay something, to get rid of their unwelcome visitors. Then the Colonies resisted. They refused to pay the tax on tea sent over here in English ships. The King was firm; so were the people. They resolved not to be taxed without their consent. The king sent an army and war-ships to America.

More troops were sent here, and soldiers were

constantly on the streets, and the Colonists determined to drive the troops out of Boston.

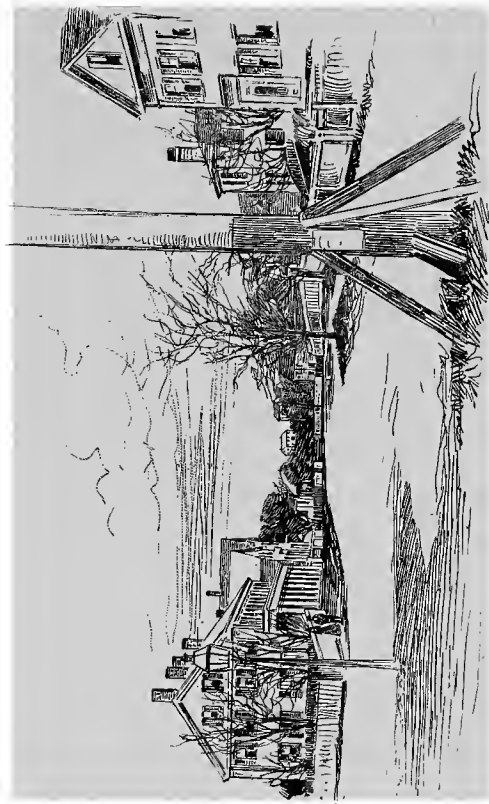
Young men left their work in the fields, and became soldiers. Meetings were held, and companies were formed, until the Americans had a large army, under General Ward. The plan was to drive the British out of Boston into their ships, which were lying in the harbor. So they besieged Boston, and formed a line of entrenchments, to cut the British off from food and other necessities. Charlestown was selected for the point of attack, because it was nearer Boston.

On April 20, 1775, General Ward took command of the American forces, and established his headquarters at Cambridge.

The enlistment of soldiers went on rapidly, and in a few days thirty thousand men were gathered. A great part of them came from New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Connecticut.

Washington Street skirts the base of Prospect Hill, leaving the McLean Asylum on the south, and conducting straight on to the col-





UNION SQUARE, AS IT WAS IN 1870.



lege in Cambridge. By this road the Americans marched to and retreated from Bunker Hill.

The second road proceeded by Mount Benedict to the summit of Winter Hill, where it divided, one branch turning northward to Medford, while the other pursued its way by the Powder Magazine to Arlington.

Besides these, there were no other roads leading to Boston. The shore between was a marsh, unimproved except for the hay it afforded. A causeway from the side of Prospect Hill and a bridge across Miller's River gave access to the farm at Lechmere's Point.

Mount Benedict is the first point, after passing Charlestown Neck, where we encounter the American line of investment during the siege of Boston. "The hill was within short cannon range of the British Post on Bunker Hill."<sup>26</sup>

Before the battle of Bunker Hill, earthworks were thrown up near Union Square, commanding Washington Street. "On June 16, General Ward ordered Colonel William Prescott, with three Massachusetts regiments and a battalion of Connecticut troops, about a thousand or

twelve hundred in all, to proceed that night to Charlestown, and seize and fortify Bunker Hill. The troops were paraded on Cambridge Common, and after a prayer by Doctor Langdon, president of Harvard College, at about nine o'clock in the evening, began their march toward Bunker Hill, passing through Somerville by way of Washington Street and Union Square, down to, and across, the Neck. Colonel Prescott, with two sergeants carrying dark lanterns, led the way.

“General Israel Putnam and Colonel Richard Gridley, the engineer of the army, accompanied the expedition, and following were wagons, with entrenching tools.

“Colonel John Patterson’s regiment of Berkshire men had been stationed at the redoubt near the foot of Prospect Hill, where they probably remained throughout the day. All other Massachusetts troops and those of New Hampshire and Connecticut were ordered to the front. A great part of them never arrived there, the furious cannonading from the fleet across the Neck, and into East Somerville, rendering any attempt

to reach the peninsula perilous. Yet it was over this Neck and through this storm of shot and shell that the terror-stricken people fled into Somerville from their burning homes in Charlestown.

“Somerville beheld vivid scenes of war that day: incessant marching of troops toward the front, over Washington Street and Broadway; citizens fleeing here and there from their burning town; officers galloping to and fro between the battle-field and Cambridge; artillery bombarding the fleet from Asylum Hill; shot and shell from the frigates mercilessly raking the easterly part of the town; fugitives and wounded soldiers, on litters or on the shoulders of their comrades, hurrying to places of safety; and finally the retreating army, who, victorious in defeat, planted themselves on Prospect and Winter Hills, expecting a renewal of the battle and prepared for it.”<sup>27</sup>

“It is worthy of remembrance that the orders to take possession of the hill were issued on the same day that Washington was officially notified of his appointment to command the army.”<sup>28</sup>

## X

### REVOLUTIONARY FORTIFICATIONS

AFTER the battle of Bunker Hill, the Americans began to fortify Prospect and Winter Hills. The works on Prospect Hill were superintended by General Putnam. The New Hampshire men, under General Folsom, were actively constructing fortifications on Winter Hill.

“Mount Benedict was fortified by General Sullivan under a severe cannonade, the working party being covered by a detachment of riflemen, posted in an orchard and under the shelter of stone walls.

“The Continental advanced outpost was in an orchard in front of Mount Benedict. In summer the poor fellows were not so badly off, but in the inclement winter they needed the great watch-coats which were every night issued

to them before they went on duty, and which the poverty of the army required them to turn over to the relieving guard. Here, as at Boston Neck, the pickets were near enough to each other to converse freely, a practice it was found necessary to prohibit.”<sup>29</sup>

On Prospect Hill General Greene had his Rhode Islanders, and on Winter Hill were the men of New Hampshire.

“In a letter to the Committee of Safety, General Sullivan lamented extremely that the New Hampshire forces were without a chaplain and were obliged to attend prayers with the Rhode Islanders on Prospect Hill.

“On a little promontory which overlooks the Mystic, could long be seen the remains of a redoubt erected by General Sullivan [now gone, 1903]. At this point the river makes a westerly bend, so that a hostile flotilla must approach for some distance in the teeth of a raking fire from this redoubt. This was fully proved when the enemy brought their floating batteries within range to attack the working party on Ploughed Hill [Mount Benedict] and enfilade the road.

A nine-pounder mounted in this redoubt sank one of the enemy's batteries and disabled the other, while an armed vessel which accompanied them had her foresail shot away and was obliged to sheer off.

"Leaving the redoubt, a hundred yards higher up the hill, we find traces of another work, with two of the angles quite clearly defined." <sup>30</sup> These traces no longer exist.

July 2, 1775, there arrived in camp General Washington, accompanied by General Charles Lee, second in command, and Horatio Gates, adjutant-general of the army. General Lee's headquarters were in the John Tufts house on Sycamore Street.

"All the State organizations on July 4 were taken into the service and pay of the United Colonies and reorganized, and on July 22 were formed into three divisions, viz.:—

"The left wing was composed of two brigades, one at Winter Hill under General Sullivan, the other at Prospect Hill, under General Greene; the centre, two brigades, one commanded by Heath; the right also was composed



of two brigades. The left held the line from Mystic River to Prospect Hill; the centre from Prospect Hill to Charles River; the right from Charles River to Roxbury Neck. The entire left wing and perhaps half of the centre were within Somerville limits, and her hills were crowned with the strongest and most elaborate works of the whole line, among which were: The redoubt on Ten Hills Farm; 'Winter Hill Fort'; the 'French Redoubt' on Central Hill; the 'Citadel' on Prospect Hill; the strong entrenchments on Ploughed Hill; 'Fort Number Three,' near Union Square; and Putnam's 'Impregnable Fortress,' on Cobble Hill." <sup>31</sup>

"The principal fortification of the left wing was thrown up directly across the road leading over the hill, now Broadway, at the point where the Medford road diverges.

"A hundred yards in advance of the fort were outworks, in which guards were nightly posted. When Central Street was made, the remains of the entrenchment were exposed and are remembered by some of the older people." <sup>32</sup>

“ July 6, 1775, the Continental Congress issued a declaration setting forth the grievances of the Provinces and reasons for taking arms; July 15, this was read at Cambridge, and July 18, to the army on Prospect Hill, and was received with patriotic enthusiasm. A prayer was offered by the Reverend Mr. Langdon, cannon were fired, and the Connecticut flag, recently received by Putnam, was unfurled. On one side it bore the motto, ‘ An Appeal to Heaven,’ and on the other, ‘ Qui transtulit sustinet.’ [He who has transplanted will sustain.] On the night of October 22, General Putnam took possession of Cobble Hill [Asylum grounds] and began fortifying.

“ December 28, an endeavor was made by a detachment from Winter Hill to capture the enemy’s pickets near the Neck. They attempted to cross on the ice just south of Cobble Hill, but one of the men, slipping, fell and discharged his musket, thereby alarming the British, and the expedition was abandoned.

“ From Prospect Hill, January 1, 1776, the new flag of the United Colonies was unfurled

to the breeze. It had thirteen stripes, alternate red and white, but the field contained, instead of stars, as now, the crosses of Saint George and Saint Andrew. A year and a half later, stars took the place of crosses. A tablet has been erected on the hill in memory of this flag-raising.

"In February, Colonel Knox arrived with the captured Ticonderoga cannon and stores. These increased immensely the strength of the Americans, and a little later enabled them to carry into execution that daring feat, the seizing and fortifying of Dorchester Heights. This successful movement so seriously threatened the British army and shipping, that after various threatening manœuvres, on Sunday, March 17, they embarked and left Boston forever." <sup>33</sup>

The British planned a campaign along the banks of the Hudson River under Generals Burgoyne and Howe. Burgoyne surrendered to General Gates at Saratoga October 17, 1777. In Burgoyne's army were nineteen hundred Germans. They were brought to Winter Hill,

and given quarters in the tents and barracks formerly used by the American soldiers.

These Germans were hired by the British from the Landgrave of Hesse, the Duke of Brunswick, and the Count of Hanau. They were promised free passage to England, and were brought to Somerville in order to embark from Boston.

“The camp of the prisoners was encircled by a chain of outposts. The officers, who were permitted to go beyond the camp, were obliged to promise in writing, on their word of honor, to go no farther beyond it than a mile and a half.

“The camp was located on a height, which, to a distance of eight miles, was surrounded with woods, thus presenting a splendid view of Boston, the harbor, and the vast ocean.” <sup>34</sup>

The Hessians remained here a year, and then were moved to Virginia.

This ended Somerville's share in the Revolutionary War.

## XI

### THE STREETS

WAR ended, peace declared, freedom and independence established, the farmer could now change his sword for a scythe, and devote his energies to cultivating the soil and improving his home.

In the part that is now called Somerville, the houses were few and far between.

There were few streets, also. Along the marsh below Union Square berry bushes grew in abundance, and the pink petals of the marsh-mallow waved like rosy banners in the August breeze. Apple orchards were plenty, and the boys had free access to them. The old canal was new then, and carried passengers and freight from Boston to Lowell. On the hills picnic parties gathered under the sheltering

trees in summer, and young people enjoyed the pleasure of coasting down their slopes in winter, without danger to themselves, or to the "grown-ups," who had room enough to get out of the way.

Very few of the streets bear the names now that they were called by in the beginning of the last century. Somerville Avenue was called Milk Row, on account of the number of milk dealers who lived on it. Mystic Avenue, laid out about 1803, was called the Medford Turnpike.

A Turnpike Road is a road closed by toll-gates or crossbars. The toll collected from carriages, teams, and foot-passengers, whenever the gates are opened, is used to defray the expense of keeping the road in order. These toll-gates are quite common in the rural districts of England, and we imported the custom from that country.

Beacon and Hampshire Streets were laid out in 1800, and were called "the Middlesex Turnpike." Broadway has been called by nine different names, and Washington Street by ten.

Many of the modern streets were named for trees which probably grew on the spot. We have Willow Avenue, Cherry and Cedar Streets, Linden Avenue, and Beech Street. The latter street begins on Somerville Avenue, runs north for some distance, then west, and ends in Spring Street. The part running from Somerville Avenue was originally called Oak Street, but some real estate owner near Union Square opened a longer street, and the name of little Oak Street was changed to Beech Street. To make it still more confusing, the extension of this street from the Martin W. Carr School to Central Street is called Atherton Street.

Continuing, we have Laurel, Cypress, Maple, and Poplar Streets. We have also Elm Street, Garden Court, and Walnut and Vine Streets. One short street bore the very pretty name of Chestnut Court. It has had several aliases, as Chestnut Place, Harvard Place, York Terrace, and is now [1903] called Monmouth Street. Other streets are named in honor of the old families who have been active in town affairs; as, for instance, Vinal Avenue and Aldersey

Street are reminders of the Vinal family, whose members have always occupied an honorable position in the history of Somerville. Stone Avenue is a memorial of another old family. Tufts Street, Temple Street, Craigie Street, Munroe Street, and Jaques Street, among others, are identified with the names of the early settlers.

In order to perpetuate the memory of the historic deeds of our ancestors, the city in 1890 erected various tablets throughout the city. The inscriptions are as follows:—

On Abner Blaisdell's house, Somerville Avenue: "Headquarters of Brigadier-General Nathaniel Greene, in command of the Rhode Island Troops during the siege of Boston, 1775 - 6."

On the Oliver Tufts house, Sycamore Street: "Headquarters of Major-General Charles Lee, commanding left wing of the American Army during the siege of Boston, 1775 - 6."

On the stonework of the battery, Central Hill Park: "This battery was erected by the city in 1885, and is within the lines of the 'French



Redoubt,' built by the Revolutionary Army in 1775 as a part of the besieging lines of Boston. The guns were donated by Congress, and were in service during the late Civil War."

On Prospect Hill: "On this Hill the Union Flag with its thirteen stripes — the emblem of the United Colonies — first bade Defiance to an Enemy, January 1, 1776. Here was the Citadel, the most formidable work in the American Lines during the Siege of Boston: June 17, 1775, to March 17, 1776."

On Elm Street, corner of Willow Avenue: "A sharp fight occurred here, between the Patriots and the British, April 19, 1775. This marks British Soldiers' graves."

On Washington Street, corner of Dane Street: "John Woolrich, Indian Trader, built near this place in 1630 — the first white settler on Somerville soil."

At the junction of Broadway and Main Street: "Paul Revere passed over this road, on his midnight ride to Lexington and Concord, April 18, 1775. Site of the Winter Hill

Fort, a stronghold built by the American Forces while besieging Boston, 1775 - 6."

On Washington Street, opposite Rossmore Street: "On this Hillside, James Miller, Minute-man, aged sixty-five, was slain by the British, April 19, 1775. — 'I am too old to run.'"

The report of the Historical Society for 1901 has the following: —

"The marking of the many historical places in Somerville is one of the things to which the Historical Society is giving its attention. Last year, on its petition to the city, the outline of the famous French Redoubt on Central Hill was designated by granite monuments set in the ground; a tablet showing the form of the work, etc., was placed alongside of the one descriptive of the present battery, but by some oversight the fact that the marking was done on petition of our society does not appear on the tablet.

"This year the society has again petitioned for the permanent marking of quite a number of other interesting places. This petition was quickly referred to a committee, and the proper

order passed to carry out the suggestion. The list of places is as follows: —

On Masonic Block, Union Square: "Site of recruiting stand for Union soldiers in Civil War."

On Asylum Hill (Cobble Hill): "Site of 'Putnam's impregnable fortress,' 1775."

On Convent Hill (Ploughed Hill): "Fortified and bombarded in 1775-76. Site of Ursuline Convent, founded 1820, and opened 1826; burned 1834. Hill dug down 1875 to 1897."

On south side Mystic Avenue (nearly opposite coal wharf: "Old fort. Extreme left of American army, 1775-76. Commanded Mystic River."

In Broadway Park: "Route of Middlesex Canal. Chartered 1793; opened 1803."

At Somerville and Charlestown line on Washington Street: "Paul Revere, on his famous ride, April 18, 1775, was intercepted here by British officers, and escaped."

On Ten Hills Farm: "Site of the mansion of Robert Temple, afterward Colonel Jaques."

On old wharf, east of Middlesex Avenue, near new bridge, south shore Mystic River: "Ancient wharf. Here Governor Winthrop launched the 'Blessing of the Bay,' the first ship built in Massachusetts, July 4, 1631. The British landed here in their raid on the Powder House, September 1, 1774."

On Prospect Hill: "Site of old wind mill."

## XII

### THE BURNING OF THE CONVENT

THE hills that were admired by the residents of adjacent towns and villages are now demolished, with a few exceptions.

A slight eminence shows where Winthrop Hill stood, but all traces of its former beauty are gone.

"Asylum Hill," "Miller's Hill," or "Cobble Hill," is very much changed. In 1816 it was sold to the Massachusetts General Hospital, and the grounds were laid out with care, and commodious buildings were erected for the comfort and treatment of the insane. Patients from all parts of the country, rich and poor, were sent to the asylum. It was named after John McLean, a generous man whose great desire was to help the unfortunate. Doctor Luther

V. Bell, for whom the Bell School is named, was the second superintendent. The asylum has been moved to Waverley, and the beautiful lawns, gardens, and terraces have been to a great extent ground down by the tracks of the Boston & Maine railroad.

"Ploughed Hill," "Convent Hill," or "Mount Benedict," is now demolished. Those who have had the pleasure of standing upon its summit can never forget the magnificent view from every side.

An unfortunate record is connected with this hill.

In 1826 a convent was built here, to be used as a boarding-school, under the supervision of the Ursuline nuns. The nuns were a body of religious women who had devoted their lives to the care of the sick and the teaching of girls. They were members of the Roman Catholic Church.

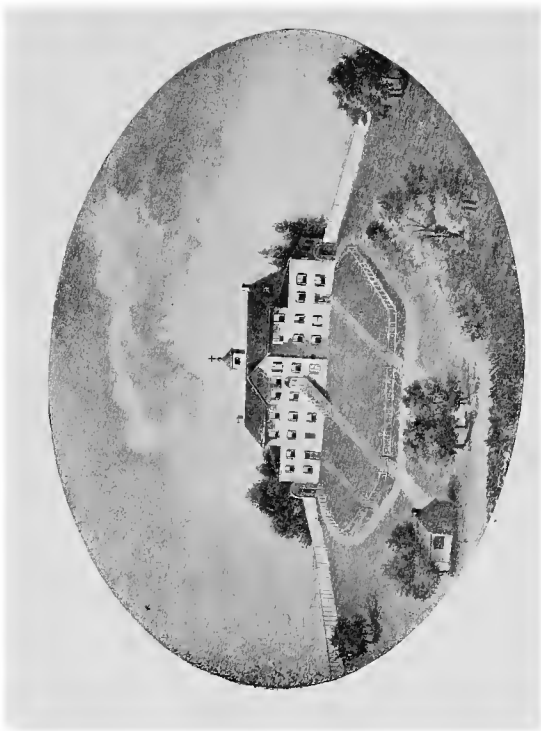
They occupied a house on Ploughed Hill, and changed the name to Mount Benedict. The convent, built of stone and brick, was finished in 1828. "It was a four-story building, eighty

feet long, facing toward the east. A long flight of steps led up to it from the street. Two large wings were added later. It was the most imposing structure of its kind in Massachusetts.

“The grounds were laid out in an attractive manner. The southern slope was arranged in three terraces, on which were reared vines, trees, and shrubs. A driveway, shaded by handsome trees, led up in a diagonal direction from the southeast corner of the enclosure, and wound around a circular flower-bed in front of the house. The Bishop’s lodge and the stable were also upon the southern slope. On the northern face of the hill were grass land, a vegetable garden, and an orchard.

“The school flourished for seven years, but many people complained because it was not open to visitors as freely as public schools were, and there was a feeling that the teaching tended to make Roman Catholics of the Protestant pupils.

“A Miss Reed, the daughter of a respectable family living in Somerville, became interested



THE URSULINE CONVENT.

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in the work of the nuns. The more she learned about them, the more fascinated she became with them and their mode of life. Finally she decided to become a Roman Catholic and a nun. She made known her wishes to the Bishop and the Superior of the convent, and against the wishes of her parents entered the convent, with the intention of becoming a nun.

“A few months’ trial showed her that she had mistaken her calling; she did not like the plain food, the hard couch, the difficult work, and the routine of daily worship. She felt that she must return to her home.

“Fearing that the nuns might try to persuade her to remain, or perhaps dreading to say farewell to those who had treated her kindly, or disliking to witness their disappointment when told of her decision, she secretly climbed over the fence and returned to her family and to her early religion. Her escape created some excitement at the time, but it soon died out.

“Some time after this, another event happened to excite the people in the neighborhood of the convent.

“One of the nuns, a Miss Harrison, who had been a teacher of music there for several years, became very nervous and partly insane. She ran away from the convent and sought admission to the house of Mr. Cutter, who lived opposite.

“She told him she was tired of living shut up in a convent, away from all her friends, and wished never to return to it.

“She talked very calmly, and a Mr. and Mrs. Runey came in and took her to Arlington, to the parents of a former pupil. She did not show any signs of insanity. The Bishop and the Superior were told where she was, and they induced her to go back to the convent, and promised her that she might leave it again whenever she wished. She asked the Runeys and Cutters to visit her at the convent, and if they did not see her at the end of ten days she wished them to go to the convent and ask for her.

“As she did not appear within the ten days, they went to the convent and asked for her. They were told that Miss Harrison was ill,

had no desire to see them, was perfectly satisfied with her present life, and wished to remain in the institution.

“Reports were circulated that a nun was kept against her will, and that there were underground cells where the nuns were shut up, and that subterranean passages led from the convent to the Bishop’s lodge, and that there were abuses too dreadful to tell.

“Public indignation spread, handbills were posted, and threats were uttered against the institution. The Superior was a very haughty person, and instead of meeting the people half-way and showing them that everything was perfectly open and correct, she met the Selectmen, who went in kindness to help her, very coldly, and told them she would not permit any search of the premises.

“On the night of August 4, 1834, at dusk, little knots of men began to gather about the vicinity of the convent grounds. At nine o’clock the crowd had increased. A great part were strangers to the residents, who knew

neither whence they came nor their object in coming.

“Some of the crowd started a bonfire on land near the convent. This brought the fire companies from Boston, and Engine Thirteen came up the convent avenue. When it reached the building, a volley of stones was fired, yells were uttered, and an attempt was made to batter down the doors. Finally, disregarding the remonstrances of the Selectmen and the entreaties of the Superior, the rioters forced their way into the building, and for an hour they ransacked the premises. Everything was broken open and rifled. Pianos, harps, and books were thrown from the windows. All the symbols of worship were removed and desecrated.

“The frightened inmates of the institution, numbering in all about ten nuns and forty-seven pupils, sought refuge near the tombs, till they were taken to places of shelter. The rioters at last set fire to the building, and did not leave the place till daylight.

“A few days later a meeting was held in

Faneuil Hall, and addresses were made by prominent citizens, who condemned the outrage in the strongest terms. On the fifteenth of the month, Governor Davis offered a reward of five hundred dollars for the discovery of the perpetrators, and called upon all classes for help. Although the better class of people desired to have the rioters caught and punished, the only one who was convicted was a boy of seventeen, and he was set at liberty after an imprisonment of seven months.”<sup>35</sup>

For nearly fifty years the blackened ruins stood as a memorial of the dark stain on the honor and good government of Massachusetts. The Roman Catholics have tried several times to have the Legislature pass a bill compensating them for the destruction of their property, but their efforts never met with success.

“Walnut Tree Hill” is now “College Hill.” The Universalist denomination wished to erect a college in the United States. Several desirable situations were considered, but the nearness of College Hill to Boston and the gift of twenty acres of land on its summit by Mr. Charles

Tufts secured the location of the College. It began with three students in 1854. Hosea Ballou was its first president.

Charles Tufts lived on the northerly side of Washington Street, west of the Lowell Railroad. The house is still there.

The most interesting building to young people in Tufts College is the Barnum Museum, which was built in 1883 by the late P. T. Barnum. He also gave a fund for the support and maintenance of this museum. The College is indebted to Mr. Barnum also for a large zoölogical collection. It contains many skeletons and mounted skins of animals. Among the latter is that of Jumbo, the children's favorite elephant.

"Until within a few years the remains of old forts and breastworks were visible; those on Central Hill Park were dug away in 1878, regardless of protests. On the southern slope of Prospect Hill Revolutionary traces still remain — tradition says they are the old tent-holes of 1775, or perhaps of the Burgoyne prisoners."<sup>36</sup> These have now [1903] been dug away.

## XIII

### THE SCHOOLS

IN the early days of the New England settlement schools were few, but the children's education was not neglected. The men and women who had left a beloved country to struggle with the hardships of a new and unknown land could not be ignorant or illiterate.

There is an old story of a minister who called on one of these courageous women and found her at the washtub, rocking the baby's cradle with her foot, and listening to her boy who was reciting his Latin verbs.

Children were usually taught at home. There were few school-books, and the Bible and other religious books were as useful in teaching reading as many of the books of the present day.

When the Indians sought larger hunting-

grounds, and peace was declared with England, the attention of the people was directed to the necessity of schoolhouses.

Schools were not free in colonial times. Each family paid a certain sum toward the school, in proportion to the number of children sent to school.

At first the only schoolhouse in Somerville was at the "Neck," but some years later one was built on Milk Row, on land adjoining the present cemetery. It was a small schoolhouse, consisting of one room.

In 1814, seventeen pupils were enrolled. In that year the trustees opened a summer school at Winter Hill.

The schoolhouse near the cemetery was destroyed by fire in 1817. In 1819, a new building was erected on the spot where the old one stood. It was of wood, the sides filled in with brick, finished in a plain neat style, with two coats of paint on the outside. The new school cost seven hundred dollars.

The little children had to walk some distance to attend school, for these were the limits of



the district "No. 3" given by the school trustees: —

"This district commences in Cambridge Road, sweeps around Cambridge line, runs across Milk Row by Isaac Tufts's house to Winter Hill, by the house of Joseph Adams, to Mystic River, down to the cluster of houses near the entrance to Three-Pole Lane and over to the place of beginning. It contains sixty-one families and one hundred and six children from four to fourteen years of age."

In this year a list of the holidays was given out. They were as follows: Every Wednesday and Saturday afternoon of each week; the afternoon of the annual training in May; four days in general election week; commencement day and the day following; the day of the military review when held in Charlestown; from Wednesday noon immediately preceding the annual Thanksgiving to the Monday morning following; Christmas day.

Only twelve holidays in the whole year! Five years later the list was increased by the addition of "The first Monday in June; re-

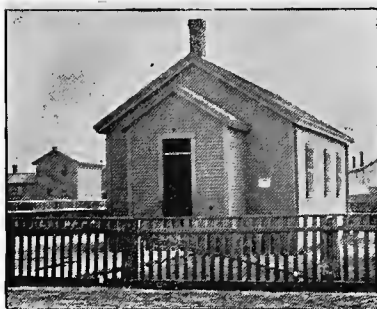
mainder of the week after Commencement; the Seventeenth of June; Fourth of July; and the day next following the semi-annual visitation."

This gave twenty holidays during the entire year. There is no mention of a summer vacation, and there was no ringing of bells for "No school" on stormy days. With our new vacation schools we seem to be going back to the customs of our ancestors.

In 1825, the Pound Primary School was built on the corner of Broadway and Franklin Street. It was so named because it was opposite the Pound.

In 1843, the Lower Winter Hill Schoolhouse was built at the corner of Broadway and Franklin Street. This probably replaced the Pound Primary. This school is often called the Prescott Schoolhouse. It is the one that was moved to Beacon Street, in 1847.

The Upper Winter Hill School was built in 1840, on the west side of Central Street, near Broadway. This schoolhouse was moved to the present site of the Prescott School in 1855. In 1856, it was moved to Prospect Street and



THE UNION SCHOOL, BUILT IN 1840.



was called the Union School. In 1891 it was discontinued as a school.

The Union School has been facetiously called "The Itinerant Knowledge Box."

In 1836, a schoolhouse was built to accommodate those living near Prospect Hill, then forming a part of the Milk Row District.

In 1839, the Prospect Hill Grammar School was established, adjoining the Prospect Hill Primary, in what is now Central Square. In 1848, it was called the "Medford Street School." It was used as a schoolhouse till 1861. It is now in the possession of the Somerville Water Committee, and is on the corner of Somerville Avenue and Prospect Street.

In 1848, the present Prospect Hill Schoolhouse was built. It accommodated two hundred and sixty-four pupils and was opened December 25. This building contained four rooms at first, but was enlarged by the addition of two rooms in 1865.

In 1843, the Walnut Hill Schoolhouse was built on Broadway, near the foot of Walnut, or College Hill. This school was started some

time before in a private house, and was taught by a man in the winter and by a woman in the summer. "In 1854, Miss Susanna C. Russell was appointed teacher for the entire year, and she continued in the position till the spring of 1867. Under her instruction pupils passed through all the primary and grammar grades, and were fitted for the High School." In 1867, this school was discontinued, but in 1868 it was moved to Cedar Street, and called the "Cedar Street School." It was enlarged in 1873, and discontinued in 1898.

In 1846, the Franklin Schoolhouse was built, on the corner of Milk Row and Kent Street. This was a two-roomed building. Two rooms were added in 1862. In 1898, the building of the M. W. Carr School rendered the Franklin School unnecessary for school purposes, and it was torn down. It stood on a large tract of land shaded by noble trees under whose sheltering boughs hundreds of children enjoyed their recesses. The spot by itself was a most delightful one, but the whistling of the locomotives in the rear, and the noise of horse-cars in front

interfered sadly with recitations. The city has wisely given the land for a public park.

In 1849 the Milk Row Primary was set on fire and entirely destroyed. It was not rebuilt, and its site became a part of the cemetery.

The school report for 1846 - 7 says: "On December 25, 1846, a new school was opened in the Prescott District. A suitable lot has been purchased on Beacon Street, near Cambridge Street, and the schoolhouse formerly occupied by the Prescott Grammar School was moved upon it and refitted for the occupation of the new occupants. It was called the Harvard Primary." It was enlarged in 1861 and burned in 1871.

The Prescott Schoolhouse was burned in 1856. It was a wooden building, containing two rooms. A brick building, consisting of seven rooms, was built on Pearl Street in 1857. This was destroyed by fire in 1866, and a brick building of ten rooms and a large hall was erected in 1867. It was named in honor of William Hickling Prescott, the historian, who was born in Salem, Mass., May 4, 1796, and who died January

28, 1859. He was the son of Judge William Prescott, and grandson of Colonel William Prescott, who commanded at Bunker Hill. He was graduated from Harvard College with honor, and intended to study law, but a great misfortune obliged him to change his plans. At a college dinner a student threw at random a crust of bread. It struck young Prescott in the left eye, severely injuring it. In time the other eye became affected, and for years he was unable to read. He was obliged to make use of "the eyes of another." In writing he employed a writing-case made for the blind. Under such difficulties he wrote the comprehensive and fascinating works, "The History of Ferdinand and Isabella," "Conquest of Mexico," "Conquest of Peru," "Reign of Philip II.," and "Life of Charles V." A foreign biographer says of him: "He was gay, good-humored and manly; most gentle and affectionate to his family; kind and gracious to all around him. Thus loving and beloved; happy and bestowing happiness; he is honored and lamented in death, and his name shall be held



in grateful remembrance in all future generations."

With his portrait before their eyes and his name daily on their lips, what greater example, humanly speaking, can young people have of noble living and an heroic spirit that overcame all obstacles, however great might have been the discouragements!

"Had his family given only him to the Republic it had been much; but so long as the sword, the ermine, and the pen are connected with the story of American civilization, so long shall the memory of three generations of Prescotts be dear to the hearts of the American people."

In 1871 the Edgerly School was built on Cross Street. It contained four rooms. In 1882 four rooms were added; in 1892 four more were found necessary. The school was named in honor of John S. Edgerly, who was born in Meredith, N. H., November 30, 1804. In 1836 he removed to Somerville. He was one of the Selectmen for fourteen years, a member

of the School Committee, and one of the Overseers of the Poor. He died January 20, 1872.

In 1850, the Spring Hill Primary School was established in Elm Place. This was a one-room building. It was torn down in 1897, to make room for the M. W. Carr School.

In 1851, a small schoolhouse was built on the west side of Cherry Street, and was called the Bell School, in honor of Doctor Luther V. Bell, the first Chairman of the School Board. In 1867 it was moved to the rear of the Franklin School. In 1871 the Harvard Primary School was burned, and the Bell School was moved to Beacon Street and renamed the Harvard Primary School. The building was sold in 1899, for sixty dollars, and is now used as a store.

In 1852, the first High School was built. In 1872 the building was vacated, and has since been used as a City Hall. An addition to the side and rear of the building was made in 1899. In 1854 the Forster School on Sycamore Street was built. It contained four schoolrooms. It was partly burned in 1866. In 1867 the present brick building was erected. It origi-

nally had eight rooms and a large hall, which was used for exhibitions, town meetings, and public entertainments. It was named after Charles Forster, a philanthropic citizen of Somerville.

Charles Forster was born in Charlestown, June 13, 1798. From 1845 to 1863 he lived at the corner of Sycamore Street and Broadway. He died in Charlestown, September 1, 1866.

“He occupied a place second to none in the hearts and affections of the people of Somerville, and left behind him a reputation that any man might envy—the reputation of a man who, by the purity of his life and character, his sweetness and kindliness of disposition, his unostentatious benevolence, the years of a long life devoted to charity toward the poor and suffering, had endeared himself to all who knew him and grown deep into their hearts.”

In 1861, the Brastow Schoolhouse was built near the junction of Medford Street and Highland Avenue. It was a two-room building, and was named for George O. Brastow, who was born in Wrentham, September 8, 1811. He came

to Somerville in 1838. He was one of the Selectmen in 1845 and in 1867. He was a member of the School Committee for five years; a member of the General Court for six years; the first Mayor of Somerville; one of the founders of the Middlesex and Somerville horse railroads. He died suddenly in Canandaigua, N. Y., November 20, 1878.

The site of the Brastow School is covered by the Central Fire Station. The building was sold and is now used as a stable.

In 1866, the Lincoln Schoolhouse was built on Elm Street. It contained four rooms. It was named in honor of Charles S. Lincoln, who was born in Walpole, N. H., April 20, 1826, and died in Somerville, April 4, 1901. He came to Somerville in 1852, as Principal of the Prospect Hill School, and afterward served the city well in various ways as a member of the School Committee; trustee of the Public Library; member of the General Court; a member of the Board of Health; and Overseer of the Poor. This schoolhouse was moved

to Clarendon Hill in 1881, and was destroyed by fire in 1884. It was rebuilt in 1885.

In 1868, the Bennett School was built on the corner of Joy and Poplar Streets. It was a four-room building. It was named in honor of Clark Bennett, who was born in Londonderry, Vt., November 3, 1810, and died in Somerville, January 6, 1882. He was a member of the Board of Aldermen for three years; for eleven years a member of the School Committee, a part of the time its chairman; and town treasurer for several years. The use of the building as a school was discontinued in 1902.

In 1867, the Franklin District had more pupils than could be accommodated in the schools already established there, and a room over a tin-shop was hired, to receive the overflow. The tin-shop was on the corner of Milk Row and Park Street, and the school was called the Park Street School. The room had been originally used for a church, and in the little dressing-rooms were the stained glass window-panes which were put there when the room was used for religious purposes. This school was

moved to the Franklin building in 1869. The tin-shop was moved a few feet down Milk Row and is still standing. It has a stairway on the outside.

The Webster School was built on Webster Avenue in 1868, and was named in honor of Daniel Webster. His life, like Benjamin Franklin's, is too well-known to be given here. This building was destroyed by fire December 14, 1893.

The Morse School, on the corner of Summer and Craigie Streets, was built in 1869. It originally contained four rooms and a hall. In 1889 six rooms were added. It was named in honor of Enoch R. Morse. He was born in Attleboro, Mass., July 25, 1822. He was a member of the School Committee for nine years, served as Selectman, and was a member of the State Legislature in 1876.

The High School, erected in 1852, was now far too small for the number of yearly applicants, and in 1871 a new building on Highland Avenue was erected. It contained a large hall, a chemical laboratory, two large schoolrooms,

and four recitation-rooms. The rooms were changed in 1883, and further changes were made in 1888.

Among the first church buildings was one on Beech Street. It was practically a union meeting-house for all denominations, but eventually became the Spring Hill Baptist Chapel. It was purchased by the city in 1872, for a schoolhouse. The price paid was five thousand dollars. The building had a long room, heated by a furnace, and with inside blinds to the windows. The chimney was in the rear. A partition was put in, to make two schoolrooms, and a large stove was placed in each room. The stovepipe in the front room passed through the partition and across the rear room and dressing-room to the chimney. The building was demolished in 1897 to make room for the M. W. Carr School.

The Prospect Hill School had become far too small for the demands upon it, and in 1874 the Luther V. Bell school was built. It contains twelve schoolrooms.

Luther V. Bell was born in Chester, N. H.,

December 20, 1806. He died February 11, 1862. He was a prominent physician, Superintendent of the McLean Asylum, member of the School Committee, member of the Executive Council, and surgeon of the Eleventh Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers.

In 1880, the Highland School was built on the corner of Highland Avenue and Grove Street. It originally contained but eight rooms. In 1890, another story was added, thus giving four extra rooms.

In 1884, the Cummings School was built on School Street. It has four rooms. This school was named in honor of John Addison Cummings. He was born in Nelson, N. H., January 16, 1838, and died January 6, 1887. He was a Lieutenant in the Sixth Regiment of the New Hampshire Volunteers, and Major of the First New Hampshire Cavalry. He came to Somerville in 1871. He was a member of the Board of Aldermen and Mayor for four consecutive years.

In 1886, the Burns School on Cherry Street was built of brick, with four schoolrooms. It



was named in honor of Mark F. Burns, who was born in Milford, N. H., May 24, 1841, and died in Somerville, January 16, 1898. He was a member of the Somerville Common Council, a member of the Board of Aldermen, a trustee of the Public Library, and Mayor of the city for four successive years. In 1897 the Burns School was enlarged by the addition of four rooms.

In 1884 the Davis School was built on Tufts Street. It contains four rooms. It was named in honor of Joshua H. Davis, who was born at Truro, November 4, 1814. He came to Somerville in 1854, "and was for twenty-five years identified with the educational interests of our city." He was a member of the School Committee, Superintendent of Schools for twenty-two years, and a member of the State Legislature for two years.

In 1886, the Bingham School was built on Lowell Street. It contains four rooms. It was named in honor of Norman Williams Bingham, who was born in Derby, Vt., May 19, 1829. He came to Somerville in 1869. He was a

member of the School Committee for fifteen consecutive years.

In 1889, the Knapp School was built, on Concord Square. In 1894, more rooms were added, making thirteen in all. It was named in honor of Oren S. Knapp. He was born in Boston, July 16, 1829, and died November 4, 1890. He came to Somerville in 1853, and was elected Principal of the Prospect Hill School, which position he retained for eleven years. He was a member of the School Committee, and for one year was Superintendent of Schools.

In 1891, the Charles G. Pope School was built, with twelve schoolrooms. It was named in honor of Charles G. Pope, who was born in Hardwick, Mass., November 18, 1840. In 1864, he came to Somerville and became Principal of the Forster School. He was a member of the Common Council, member of the General Court, a trustee of the Public Library, a trustee of Tufts College, and Mayor for three successive years. He died April 24, 1893.

In 1891, the Jacob T. Glines School was built. It had eight schoolrooms in the begin-

ning, and in 1896 five more were added. It was named in honor of Jacob T. Glines, who was born in Moultonborough, N. H., July 20, 1817, and died August 3, 1882. He was a member of the last Board of Selectmen; Chairman of the first Board of Aldermen; a member of the General Court; and member of the City Government for several years.

In 1894, the Durell School was built on Beacon Street, near Kent Street. It has four rooms. It was named in honor of Rev. George Wells Durell, who was born in Kennebunkport, Me., and died August 25, 1895. He came to Somerville in 1866, and became rector of Emmanuel Parish. He was afterward rector of St. Thomas' Parish. He was a member of the School Committee for thirteen years.

In 1895, the English High School was built on Highland Avenue, adjoining the former High School. It had fourteen class-rooms, to which others have been added, and it is still too small. It contains chemical, physical, and biological laboratories, a lecture-hall, a library, four rooms for manual training in the base-

ment, and other small rooms. The name of the former High School was changed to the Latin School on the completion of the English High School.

In 1896, the William H. Hodgkins School was built on Holland Street. It has twelve rooms. It was named in honor of William H. Hodgkins, who was born in Charlestown, Mass., June 9, 1840. He was Major in Company B, Thirty-sixth Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers. He came to Somerville after the war was over. He was a member of the Common Council for two years, and Mayor of the city for four years. He was also a member of the Senate. He was made Brevet Major for distinguished services at Fort Stedman.

In 1897, the Sanford Hanscom School was completed. It is located on Webster Street, at the corner of Rush Street. It is constructed of red brick, with granite trimmings, and contains six schoolrooms. It is named in honor of Doctor Sanford Hanscom, who was born in Albion, Me., January 28, 1841. He rendered active service in the Civil War, was twenty

years a member of the School Committee, and six years a Trustee of the Public Library. "Through the generosity of the gentleman for whom the school was named, the walls of the hallways and schoolrooms are adorned with appropriate pictures, which constantly teach to the pupils lessons of patriotism or duty, and appeal to the love of what is beautiful and elevating."

In 1898, the Martin W. Carr School was erected on Beech Street, on the site of the old Chapel. "It is the largest grammar school-house in the city, and contains fifteen classrooms." It is well ventilated and well lighted, each class-room having six large windows. It is named in honor of Martin W. Carr, who was born at Easton, Mass., March 9, 1829, and died in Somerville March 28, 1902. He was a direct descendant of Robert Carr, Governor of Rhode Island in 1692. Mr. Carr came to Somerville in 1864, and served the city two years as a member of the Common Council, and two years as alderman. He was also a member of the Water Board, a member of the School Com-

mittee for seventeen years, and a director of the Somerville Hospital. The stairways and halls of the school are adorned with beautiful pictures, the gift of Mr. Carr.

In 1899, the Albion A. Perry School was erected on Washington Street. It is a brick building and contains six class-rooms. It is named in honor of Albion A. Perry, who was born in Standish, Me., January 26, 1851. He came to Somerville in 1869. He has been a member of the School Committee, of the Common Council, and of the Board of Aldermen. He was President of the Water Board for two years. "In 1895 he was elected to the office of Mayor, after one of the warmest political contests ever held in this State; was reëlected in 1896 and 1897, and filled the office with an ability that commanded the respect of every one."

In 1901, the George L. Baxter School was erected on Bolton Street. It contains six class-rooms. It is named in honor of George L. Baxter, who was born in Quincy, Mass., Octo-

ber 21, 1842. He has been Principal of the Somerville High School for thirty-five years.

In the same year the Benjamin G. Brown School was erected on Willow Avenue. It is similar in construction to the Baxter School. It is named in honor of Professor Benjamin G. Brown, who was born in Marblehead, February 22, 1837. He has been connected with Tufts College as instructor and professor for forty years. "He served upon the School Committee of Somerville seventeen years and three months, between 1872 and 1894. In this connection he rendered valuable services to the city, his education and training admirably fitting him for the work. The excellence of our schools may be in a large measure attributed to his counsel and influence."

In 1901, the Jackson School, on the corner of Poplar and Maple Streets, was demolished to make room for a new twelve-room building. The old Bennett School is discontinued and the new building is known as the Clark Bennett School.

The schoolhouse on Morrison Street was completed in 1903 and named in honor of Martha

Perry Lowe. Mrs. Lowe was born in Keene, N. H., November 21, 1829, and died in Somerville, May 10, 1902. Her husband, Charles Lowe, had been a member of the School Committee, and she, as well as her husband, was interested in the progress and welfare of the schools. At the dedication of schoolhouses and teachers' conventions in Somerville she was always present with a poem or a speech.

The Superintendents of Schools in Somerville have been as follows: Reverend George H. Emerson, from 1857 to 1865; Oren S. Knapp, 1865 to 1866; Joshua H. Davis, 1866 to 1888; Clarence E. Meleney, 1888 to 1893; Gordon A. Southworth, the present Superintendent.

It is impossible to read the history of our schools without a strong feeling of respect and admiration for those who have had charge of our educational interests. Their courage, energy, and thrift have been unequalled. No other town records such destruction from "the torch of the incendiary," yet every building that rose



upon the ashes of its predecessor was superior to the one it replaced.

We may smile at the perambulating school-houses, but there was a principle underlying all the plans of our "school committee men," viz., that nothing should be wasted that could be utilized, and that the town's property is as sacred as the private purse.

We have always been fortunate in one respect: that our public schools are so satisfactory that private schools cannot succeed here. Several have been started, but they have not continued for any length of time.

There are two parochial schools in Somerville, in St. Joseph's Parish, Union Square. The school for girls was opened in 1880, and is under the charge of the Sisters of Notre Dame. There are, at present, seven hundred and fifty pupils. The school for boys was opened in 1893. Eight hundred boys attend, and they are taught by the Xaverian Brothers. The buildings were erected under the supervision of Rev. C. T. McGrath, the pastor of St. Joseph's Church. The schools are free, and are supported by voluntary contributions.

## XIV

### SEPARATION FROM CHARLESTOWN

MARCH 3, 1842, the residents "Without the Neck" succeeded in obtaining the passage of an act of separation approved by the Governor, and eleven days afterward the inhabitants met at the Prospect Hill Schoolhouse and elected town officers as follows: Selectmen, Nathan Tufts, John S. Edgerly, Caleb W. Leland, Luther Mitchell, and Francis Bowman; Town Clerk, Charles E. Gilman; Treasurer and Collector, Edmund Tufts.

For many years the people in this part of Charlestown had been dissatisfied with the treatment they had received from those in authority. The residents beyond the Neck had paid their share of the taxes, but they had received very little in return — five poor school-

houses, a cast-off fire-engine, and roads very much in need of repair. When the citizens could bear it no longer they petitioned the Legislature to "set them off."

A committee was appointed to decide upon a name for the new town, and Mr. Charles Miller suggested "Somerville." He thought it was a pretty name, and at that time there was no other Somerville in New England. The committee unanimously adopted the suggestion.

The first business of the town was to provide good streets. As our soil was chiefly clay, and our ledges slate, gravel was brought from other places over the railroads to make firm roadbeds.

"When the town was incorporated, it consisted chiefly of farms, brickyards, and marshes. Some land in East Somerville had been lotted and put on the market, but little, if any, elsewhere. Soon, however, there was great activity in real estate, so that by 1855 land valued in 1843 at only fifty or one hundred dollars an acre had advanced to two or three thousand dollars an acre, and some to ten thousand; and flourishing settlements began, not only in East Somerville,

but near Union Square and on Prospect, Spring, and Winter Hills, each a little village of itself."

In 1892 the City celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of its incorporation as a separate town. The Somerville Journal Company issued a Souvenir number with bits of history, poems, and photographs of residents and of old houses.

There was a procession which required two hours to pass a given point, with representations of the leading industries. A mammoth tent was erected on Central Hill, in which the literary exercises were to be held. A violent thunder-storm arose just before the hour for assembling, and the tent was demolished. Three days later another was erected, and the original programme was carried out. Speeches were delivered by Hon. George A. Bruce, Major William H. Hodgkins, Rev. George W. Durell, and others. Mrs. Martha Perry Lowe recited an original poem, and Mrs. Bailey sang the "Star Spangled Banner." The widow and daughter of Charles Miller, who gave the city its name, were invited, as guests of honor, to sit on the platform.

In fifty years "in the matter of growth, Somerville's career has been remarkable, if not phenomenal. In the whole sixty years of its existence, the gain in population has averaged 1,000 per year. In 1842, the year of the town's incorporation, there were not many more than 1,000 souls within its borders; the census of 1900 shows that we were then over 61,000 in number. From a farming town whose fertile acres were dotted here and there with houses, and whose rangeways were traversed as much by cattle and sheep as by people, we have grown to be a compact community of 65,000 people, 11,000 dwellings, and ninety miles of streets." [Mayor Glines.]

## XV

### COMPANIES IN THE CIVIL WAR

WHEN the Civil War occurred in 1860, Somerville was ready with her share of troops.

Among the companies which replied to President Lincoln's call were: The Somerville Light Infantry, Company B, under command of George O. Brastow; Company E, under command of Captain Fred R. Kinsley; Company B, under command of William E. Robinson.

In the cemetery on Somerville Avenue is a monument, erected in 1863, commemorating the valor of the men who died in the defence of the Union. This is the first memorial in honor of Union soldiers erected after the Civil War.

The inscription on the monument is as follows: —

C. C. Walden, U. S. Navy. Lost in the Brig *Bainbridge*.

Caleb Howard, 58th Mass. Sept. 30, 1861.

Mich'l Driscoll, U. S. Navy. Texas, Sept. 8, 1863.

Patrick Sheridan, 26th Mass. N. Orleans, July 1, 1864.

Elias Manning, 22nd Mass. May 15, 1864.

Wm. Connellon, 28th Mass. Hospital, Md., June 12, 1864.

Capt. Willard Kinsley, 39th Mass. City Point, April 2, 1865.

S. P. Rollins, 39th Mass. Poolesville, Nov. 22, 1862.

E. F. Keniston, 39th Mass. Somerville, April 28, 1863.

Fred A. Glines, 39th Mass. Salisbury, Jan. 6, 1865.

David Gorham, 39th Mass. Prison, Dec. 10, 1864.

John E. Horton, 39th Mass. Prison, Jan. 6, 1865.

Geo. H. Hatch, 39th Mass. Prison, Feb. 1, 1865.

Chas. G. Jones, 39th Mass. Prison, Nov. 23, 1864.

David Kendrick, 39th Mass. Prison, March 10, 1865.

Eugene B. Hadley, 39th Mass. Petersburg, Feb. 7, 1865.

Richard J. Hyde, 39th Mass. Prison, Aug. 13, 1864.

Francis J. Oliver, 39th Mass. Prison, Oct. 10, 1864.

James Moran, 39th Mass. Washington, Aug. 7, 1865.

Augustus Benze, 39th Mass. Utica, Sept. 6, 1864.

J. W. Whitmore, 39th Mass. Prison, Oct., 1864.

Washington Lovett, 39th Mass. Prison, Sept. 8, 1864.

Robert T. Powers, 39th Mass. Wilderness, May 7, 1864.

Wm. D. Palmer, 39th Mass. Wilderness, May 7, 1864.

Samuel O. Felker, 39th Mass. Wilderness, May 7, 1864.





THE SOLDIERS' MONUMENT.



Somerville Guard.

Entered U. S. Service for three years, 1862.

Geo. W. Ayers, 24th Mass. Dec. 24, 1864.

E. H. Kendall, 13th Mass. Dec. 1, 1863.

John W. Coffee, 26th Mass. April 19,  
1865.

Edwin D. Cate, 1st Mass. Cav. Prison, Jan.  
13, 1864.

I. C. Whittemore, 18th Mass. Lincoln  
Plant'n, Me., April 10, 1865.

Michael Clifford, 1st Mass. H. A. April 22,  
1865.

Lt. J. Rafferty, 9th Mass. Malvern Hill,  
July 1, 1862.

M. Haseltine, 12th Mass.

J. Millen, 22d Mass. Gaines Mills, June 22,  
1862.

J. McGuire, 9th Mass. Gaines Mills, June  
27, 1862.

H. McGlone, 9th Mass. Malvern Hill, July  
1, 1862.

A. E. Mitchell, 12th Mass. Bull Run, Aug.  
19, 1862.

N. Haseltine, 12th Mass.

Lt. W. Berry, 22d Mass. Antietam, Sept. 17, 1862.

C. Young, 29th Mass. Craney Island, Sept. 17, 1862.

E. McDonald, 21st Mass. Somerville, Sept. 6, 1862.

W. Blackwell, 99th N. Y. Norfolk, Oct. 12, 1862.

T. H. Pitman, 22d Mass. Annapolis, Feb. 27, 1863.

N. Davis, 31st Mass. Baton Rouge, Mar. 27, 1863.

A. G. Lovejoy, 2nd Mass. Batt'y. Baton Rouge, Mar. 27, 1863.

J. W. Langley, Somerville, Jan. 10, 1863.

J. Ducey, 38th Mass. Port Hudson, May 27, 1863.

Sgt. N. W. Wilson, 11th Mass. Gettysburg, July 4, 1863.

F. McQuade, 38th Mass. Oct. 16, 1863.

Leonard F. Purington, 15th Mass. Georgetown, July 22, 1865.

Entered U. S. Service for nine months.

Sept. 19, 1862.

North Carolina.

Fred A. Galletly, 23d Mass. Aug. 5, 1864.

John Holland, 15th Mass. July, 1863.

James McLaughlin, 28th Mass. Dec., 1862.

John O'Brien, 12th N. Y. Cav. Somerville,  
1863.

Wm. McDonald, 21st Mass. Roanoke Island.

Henry McVey, U. S. Navy. Salisbury, July  
31, 1864.

E. Franklin Hanaford. Bull Run, July 21,  
1861.

W. Frank Moore, Washington, July 31, 1861.

Lieut. Edward Brackett, 10th Me. Antietam,  
Sept. 18, 1862.

Samuel G. Tompkins, New Bern, June 22.  
1863.

N. Fletcher Nelson, 23d Mass. Richmond,  
June 11, 1864.

Lieut. T. J. Vande Sande, 115th N. Y. Ft.  
Monroe, Sept. 3, 1864.

Entered U. S. Service for three months,  
April 19, 1861.

Washington, D. C., and Va.

“ Their warfare is over,  
They sleep well.”

Wm. Plant, 28th Mass. Fredericksburg,  
Dec. 13, 1863.

Frank Doherty, 56th Mass. Spottsylvania,  
May 12, 1864.

Lieut. W. W. Wardell, 1st Mass. Cav. Rich-  
mond, May 28, 1864.

Patrick McCarty, 16th Mass. Fair Oaks,  
June 18, 1862.

Patrick Hayes, 5th Mass. Somerville, 1862.

Alonzo W. Temple. New Orleans, July 7,  
1863.

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Erected by the Somerville Light Infantry  
with the balance of a fund generously contrib-  
uted by their fellow citizens in aid of the

company on entering the U. S. Service for three months, April 19, 1861.

In memory of all from this town who have fallen in the service of their country.

---

S. L. I.  
Incorporated A. D. 1853.

## XVI

### THE RAILROADS

IN 1835, the first railroad through Somerville was opened. It ran from Lowell to Boston.

The Fitchburg Railroad Company was incorporated in 1842, and the road connected Charlestown and Waltham. "Until 1857 it crossed the Lowell at grade, but it was then lowered, and the Lowell was raised and bridged over it."

In 1845, the Boston & Maine Railroad was extended through Somerville to Boston.

"In 1849, the Grand Junction Railroad was planned, and was continued from the Eastern and the Boston & Maine to the Fitchburg, and afterward was extended across Cambridge and the Charles River to the Albany Railroad."

In 1854, the Eastern Railroad was built,



through Somerville, to Boston. These railroads, except the Grand Junction, which is owned by the Boston & Albany, are now under one system, that of the Boston & Maine.

“ Previous to 1858, steam-cars and omnibuses, or ‘ hourlies,’ were the only conveyances to Boston. In this year two lines of horse railroad were opened into the town, one over Broadway to Winter Hill, the other up Washington Street to Union Square, then through Milk Street [Somerville Avenue] and Elm Street to West Somerville. They were built along the sides of the streets, near the gutters, and were laid with sleepers and a T-rail like those of a steam road.

“ The second street railway in the world was the Cambridge road, between Harvard Square, Cambridge, and Bowdoin Square, Boston.”

In 1880, the Charles River Railway Company built a street railway extending from School Street through Cambridgeport to Boston, and one on Beacon Street, from Boston to North Avenue, Cambridge. The cars were all drawn by horses, and for many years the earlier lines

ran but two cars an hour. Now [1903] all the cars are moved by electricity, and on Summer Street, during the middle of the day, there are, in one hour, four cars to Roxbury, two to Bowdoin Square, and three to the Subway, in Boston. Earlier and later in the day, the cars run more frequently.

In 1872, the country was visited by a great affliction, called the epizootic, or horse disease. Electric cars were not known then, and people who lived at a distance from stores, schools, and theatres, were obliged to remain at home. One could walk with perfect safety in the middle of any street in Boston. Business was almost at a standstill. Somerville was an exception. With five lines of steam-cars from different parts of the city, the stopping of the horse-cars was but a slight inconvenience.

## XVII

### LIBRARIES

THE first circulating library in Somerville was started in a drug-store on the corner of Somerville Avenue and Kent Street, about 1868. Some years later, the Public Library was started, with the money received by the city from the dog tax. A small room in the back part of the present city hall was engaged for the purpose. Isaac Pitman was the librarian for three years, giving his services without salary. Miss H. Augusta Adams was his first assistant. The Library contained two thousand, three hundred and eighty-four volumes. Seven hundred and fifteen books had been presented to the Library.

Miss Adams succeeded Mr. Pitman as librarian. She was succeeded by John S. Hayes,

during whose term of office the library became one of the foremost in the State.

Nothing else in our history has grown so rapidly as the Library, and, apart from the churches and schools, nothing is so dear to the heart of the public. In contrast with its very humble beginning we now have the beautiful building, with all the modern conveniences and comforts, one might say luxuries. A circulation of ninety-three thousand volumes has increased to one of nearly two million volumes annually. This does not include the large number and variety of magazines and newspapers.

A few years ago, Mrs. Harriet M. Laughlin, the daughter of Mr. Pitman, gave one thousand dollars to the Library in memory of her father. This is the only large sum given to the Library, and it reflects great credit on our community that it can start and maintain a Library, unaided, which compares more than favorably with those of other cities of equal wealth.

The "Children's Room" is a favorite resort. An assistant is always at hand to give aid to the little ones who may need it. The room

is lined with bookcases, and the children are allowed to handle the books and make their own selections.

Under the administration of Mr. Sam Walter Foss many noted improvements in the Library have been made. Each grammar school can be supplied with a set of books, sufficient to give one to each pupil. There are also different Library stations throughout the city; and a house-to-house delivery can be had upon the payment of a small fee.

## XVIII

### THE CITY CHARTER

“ON April 14, 1871, the act establishing the City of Somerville was approved and accepted by the voters at a town meeting held for that purpose on April 27. On December 4, the first city election occurred, resulting in the choice of George O. Brastow as Mayor, and of a Board of Aldermen and Councilmen.”

The city was divided into four wards. From each ward there were chosen two aldermen, four common councilmen, and three members of the school committee.

“The most important measure that demanded the attention of the first city government was the abatement of the nuisance in that part of Miller’s River which extended from the Boston & Lowell Railroad, at the Cambridge and Somerville line, to the rear of the Union Glasshouse,

on Webster Avenue.” This river received the drainage from two slaughter-houses and several factories, as well as house drainage, and the odor from it was so bad that people living in the vicinity could not sleep, and the buildings near it were discolored by the offensive gases which came from it. The cities of Cambridge and Somerville united in their efforts and, sharing the expense, caused the river to be filled and a sewer to be constructed.

Under the first city government brick sidewalks were laid.

In 1875, Milk Street, formerly Milk Row, was renamed Somerville Avenue. This historic road has on it many beautiful elms of unknown age. They were in full vigor at the time of the Revolution.

In 1875, the Broadway Park was laid out. It was formerly a marsh “so soft and deep that a timber structure on piles was built to sustain the curbing of the pond.” It was a very expensive piece of work for the city, and a great affliction to the taxpayers for many years. Now it is a beautiful park.

In 1896, a portion of land near Washington Street, called "Wyatt Pits," was purchased by the city, laid out in lawns and walks, and named "Lincoln Park."

Another spot favored by the children in Ward Four, now Ward Six, was the pond called Pine Island Pond, on the Dickinson estate, situated on Elm Street, between Charles and Mossland Streets. It was an artificial pond, with an island in the centre, and on the island stood a lonely pine-tree. This island was often used as an illustration by the teacher of geography. In winter the children found the pond a delightful place for skating and sliding. The pond was filled in 1900.

In 1902, the city purchased the Clarendon Hill Ledge for a Public Park.

In 1893, the City Hospital on Crocker Street was begun. Miss Martha R. Hunt gave a generous sum toward its establishment, and the citizens contributed an equal amount.



## XIX

### THE NEW CHARTER

IN 1900, the City Charter was changed. The Common Council was abolished; the city was divided into seven wards, with two members of the school committee to be chosen from each ward.

The Mayors of Somerville to the present time have been as follows:—

George O. Brastow	. .	1872 - 74
William H. Furber	. .	1874 - 76
Austin Belknap	. . .	1876 - 78
George A. Bruce	. . .	1878 - 81
John A. Cummings	. .	1881 - 85
Mark F. Burns	. . .	1885 - 89
Charles G. Pope	. . .	1889 - 92
William H. Hodgkins	. .	1892 - 96

Albion A. Perry	. . .	1896 - 98
Geo. O. Proctor	. . .	1898 - 1900
Edward Glines	. . .	1900 -

Mr. Glines is the present mayor [1903].

## XX

### THE INDUSTRIES OF SOMERVILLE

THE industries of Somerville are many and varied. In size and extent the North Packing & Provision Company stands first. In 1902, it paid a tax amounting to more than twenty-eight thousand dollars. The packing-house covers thirteen acres of land, and is the most complete one in the world. Its business is to supply fresh and cured meats to all parts of the world. It employs more than twelve hundred men.

The American Tube Works, for the manufacture of brass tubing, began operation in Somerville in 1851. It employs nearly a thousand men, and pays an annual tax of five thousand dollars. It is situated on Somerville Avenue.

The Fresh Pond Ice Company has a very extensive business. It is located near Wash-

ington Street and the Fitchburg Railroad. The ice is brought in refrigerator cars from Brookline, N. H.

The Union Glass Company was organized in 1854. The works are situated on Webster Avenue, near Union Square. Here are manufactured lamp chimneys, gas globes, lamps, and a great variety of cut glass and decorated glassware. The firm employs about two hundred people.

Brick making was one of the early industries of Somerville. The region below Union Square is called "Brick Bottom," because of the brick business once carried on there. In another part of the town is a district called "The Patch," which shows traces of the early works. "The size of the brick was regulated by Charles I., hence the name statute-bricks. The first vessels which arrived at Salem had bricks stowed under their hatches, which were doubtless used in the erection of some of the big chimney-stacks that still exist there. Bricks are more durable than stone. The sun-dried bricks of Nineveh and Babylon are still in existence,

while the Roman baths of Caracalla and Titus have withstood the action of the elements far better than the stone of the Coliseum or the marble of the Forum." The only brickmaking business now in Somerville is at Ten Hills Farm, conducted by William A. Sanborn.

In 1874, the Sprague & Hathaway Portrait Copying House was established in West Somerville. Here the business of framing pictures is carried on quite extensively.

In 1881, the Derby & Kilmer Desk Company was organized. A few years later the company removed to Somerville. The works are situated on Vernon Street, near the Somerville Railroad Station. The company is now the Derby Desk Company.

In 1821, the Middlesex Bleachery and Dye Works was established. It employs a large number of men. Some years ago one of the buildings caught fire, and the principal of one of the grammar schools and his pupils became so interested in helping the people move their possessions from the houses near by that they forgot to start for school until it was too

late to do so. Then the principal sent word that there would be no school. The message was unnecessary, for although the teachers were present, the pupils were all at the fire.

Carpet cleaning, repairing of furniture, and the remaking of mattresses is carried on at Broadway, East Somerville.

William M. Armstrong conducts a large cooperage business on Somerville Avenue.

On Elm Street and Somerville Avenue are the carriage manufacturing establishments of Leavitt & Henderson.

In the rear of the Bleachery on Somerville Avenue is a distillery. New England rum is made here by Daniel E. Chase & Company.

The manufacturing business of M. W. Carr & Company, in West Somerville, is very extensive and interesting. All kinds of jewelry, badges, and other novelties are made and electroplated here.

The I. H. Brown Moulding Company occupies the building at 289 Washington Street. This firm makes mouldings, sashes, brackets,

etc., but a special branch is the making of cabinets for schools and museums.

In 1855, John P. Squire bought a tract of land on Miller's River, a part of it in East Cambridge and a part in Somerville, and started a pork-packing business. The business has increased greatly, and now the company known as John P. Squire & Company ranks third in the United States.

There are many other industries in Somerville, but mention is made here of only the oldest or the most extensive ones.

## XXI

### EMINENT RESIDENTS

SOMERVILLE has been the home of many distinguished persons, — artists, musicians, and authors.

Among musicians are: Mrs. Walter C. Bailey, Miss Gertrude Edmands, Miss Annie Lord (Mrs. S. Henry Hooper), Mrs. H. M. Smith, Miss Evangeline Houghton (Mrs. Alexander Crerar), Miss Ruby Cutter, Laurence F. Brine, S. Henry Hadley, for many years teacher of music in the schools, and his sons, Henry K. Hadley and Arthur Hadley.

There are many others in the rising generation who bid fair to win fame for themselves as well as for our city. Among the latter are: Albert A. Densmore and Miss Eleonora M. Bragdon. Both have unusual voices, and are ranked among professionals.



Among authors and writers who have lived in Somerville are: —

Elbridge S. Brooks, the children's friend, who wrote such charming stories as "In Leisler's Times," "Century Book of Famous Americans," "Historic Boys," "Historic Girls," and many others.

His daughter, Miss Geraldine Brooks, who has written "Dames and Daughters of the Young Republic."

Sam Walter Foss, whose verses are attractive to old and young alike, and who has given us "Back Country Poems," "Whiffs from Wild Meadows," "Dreams in Homespun," and other books.

Miss Anna C. Brackett, for many years a contributor to the leading magazines.

Gordon A. Southworth, author of a series of Arithmetics, and also, with the assistance of the late Farley Goddard, of Harvard University, author of some text-books on language, "First Lessons in Language," and "Elements of Composition and Grammar." All these books are used in our schools, and are help-

ful to the teacher and interesting to the pupil. Mr. Southworth was born in Vermont. He has taught in New Hampshire, and in Malden, and for twenty years was principal of the Prescott School. In 1893 he was elected to the office of Superintendent of the Somerville schools.

Martha Perry Lowe, author of "The Olive and the Pine," the "Memoir of Charles Lowe," and other books.

Douglas Frazar, author of "Perseverance Island," "Log of the Maryland," etc.

Mrs. Nancy T. Munroe, a constant contributor to the press and author of occasional poems.

Isaac F. Shepard, a writer of poems.

Frank M. Hawes, author of "Poems."

Wyzeman Marshall, writer of prose and poetry.

Edwin D. Sibley, author of "Stillman Gott."

Harold C. Bailey, author of "My Lady of Orange" and "Karl of Erbach."

Charles H. Taylor, manager of the *Boston Globe*, and former editor and founder of the *American Homes Magazine* — the first ten-cent

magazine in this country. The office was burned in the Boston fire of 1872.

Robert Luce, journalist and lecturer, author of "Electric Railways," "Writing for the Press," and "Going Abroad?"

William H. Hills, journalist, publisher, and editor of *The Writer*.

Albert E. Winship, lecturer, author, and editor of the *Journal of Education*. Mr. Winship has written many educational works.

Edwin M. Bacon, author of "King's Dictionary of Boston," and of several other books of like interest.

M. J. Canavan, author of "Ben Comee" and other books for boys.

Charles D. Elliot, author of "Somerville's History" and lecturer on historical subjects; former president of the Somerville Historical Society.

Lewis C. Flanagan, author of "Essays in Poetry and Prose."

George Russell Jackson, originator of the "Pencillings" column in the *Somerville Journal*, and a contributor to the leading magazines.

Mrs. E. A. Bacon, editor of the *Ladies' Repository*.

Mrs. Mary A. Pillsbury, author of "The Legend of the Old Mill," and other poems.

Miss Helen J. Sanborn, author of a book on Nicaragua.

Mrs. Barbara N. Galpin, author of "In Foreign Lands" and "History of Somerville Journalism."

George W. D'Vys, novelist and verse-writer, author of "A Life's Sacrifice," "Dr. Fanny Evans," "Jean O'Connell," and other stories.

C. W. Willis ("Allan Eric"), author of "A Yankee Crusoe," and other books.

Dr. Edward C. Booth is an authority on local history, and wrote the chapter on Somerville in the Middlesex County history.

John S. Hayes wrote much about local history, and also published a pamphlet, "A Souvenir of Winter Hill."

J. T. Trowbridge, author of "Cudjo's Cave" and other novels once lived in Somerville.

At the junction of Broadway and Main Street stands a house which is supposed to have

been built in 1805. Edward Everett, the famous preacher and writer, lived here between 1826 and 1830.

There have been many other literary folk in Somerville, but the limited scope of this work will not permit an extended list. A little incident, however, may be interesting to the young.

When Rev. Mr. Durell was conducting an examination in the Prospect Hill Grammar School, he noticed that two little girls in the graduating class were uncommonly bright. He was so much impressed by their recitation that he asked their names, and was told that they were sisters, and that their name was Saxe. Then he asked the name of the father, and was pleased to hear that it was John G. Saxe, the well-known writer of humorous verse, who, wishing to be near Boston for a while, had taken a house in Somerville, and sent his children to the public school.

The dearest person to the child mind and child heart was the heroine of "Mary Had a Little Lamb." Everybody knows the story of Mary and her little lamb; but not every one

knows that Mary E. Sawyer, who was born near Worcester, Mass., was the heroine of the poem.

When Mary was a little girl she found a new-born lamb nearly dead with hunger and cold. She tenderly nursed it back to life, and became devotedly attached to her gentle charge. The lamb was her constant companion and play-mate, and was to her what a doll is to most children. For hours she would dress her lamb and "make believe" it was her baby. One day her brother suggested that she take her lamb to school with her. The thought so delighted Mary that she started earlier than usual for the schoolhouse, reached there before the other scholars, and put the little lamb under her seat, where it lay contentedly.

When Mary's turn came for her recitation the lamb ran down the aisle after her, to the intense delight of the scholars and the surprise of the teacher. The lamb was put outside, and it waited on the door-step for Mary and followed her home. A young man named John Roulston chanced to be a visitor at the school, and the pathetic incident led him to compose the famous

stanzas, which he presented to the owner of the lamb. Some years afterward Miss Mary Sawyer was married to Mr. Columbus Tyler.

When the lamb was old enough to shear, Mary's mother knit her two pairs of stockings of the wool; and Mrs. Tyler kept these stockings until she was eighty years old. When the Old South Church of Boston was raising money, she unravelled a pair of the stockings, and wound the yarn on small cards, upon which she wrote her autograph; and these cards were sold for upward of \$100. Mrs. Tyler died in December, 1889.

Mr. and Mrs. Columbus Tyler built a beautiful house on Central Street, which is now the parsonage of the Unitarian Church. Mrs. Tyler loved all children and all who knew her loved her.

Tribute should be paid to those who by their heroism have saved lives in the face of certain death.

Captain Francis M. Howes, the Commodore of the line of steamers controlled by the Merchants

and Miners Transportation Company, has saved fifteen crews from drowning.

Captain Alfred Sorensen has received many medals in recent years for the bravery displayed in saving the lives of seamen. His latest medal came from the Massachusetts Humane Society for saving the lives of seventeen men, the crew of a tug which struck on Mt. Desert Rock, December 15, 1902.



## XXII

### THE CHURCHES

IN 1844, the First Congregational [Unitarian] Society was organized, and the cornerstone of a church was laid near the site of the English High School. This society was started in 1842, by Miss Elizabeth P. Whittredge, a teacher in the public schools, who had devoted her Sunday mornings to giving religious instruction to the children in her school. Rev. Richard M. Hodges, of Cambridge, preached the first sermon.

The first church was dedicated in 1845. This church was destroyed by fire, and a new one was built on its site in 1854. This church also was burned, and a third one was built in January, 1869. In September, 1870, during a fierce gale, this building was unroofed. A

lady who happened to be looking in that direction said that the wind lifted the roof as if it were a blanket, and dropped it on the ground. At that time many chimneys were blown down and trees were uprooted on Summer Street, but no other damage was done. In 1893, the third building, with the land about it, was sold to the city for forty-five thousand dollars. Land was purchased on the opposite side of Highland Avenue, and the present church was erected, at a cost of eighty thousand dollars. It is built of stone, and is more commodious than the old building. In the rear, but connected with the church, is a smaller building, which has a Hall and a Sunday-School room, besides smaller rooms. The Hall is used for the meetings of the Heptorean Club and other entertainments. The different pastors have been:—

Rev. John T. Sargent, Rev. Augustus R. Pope, Rev. Charles Lowe, Rev. Henry H. Barber, Rev. John S. Thomson, and the present incumbent, Rev. William H. Pierson.

The parsonage on Central Street is the gift

of Columbus Tyler, who was always a generous friend of the church.

The Second Unitarian Church was organized in 1891 on Elm Street, West Somerville. The pastor in charge is Rev. Albert H. Spence, Jr.

In 1852, thirty persons organized the First Baptist Church. The services were held in a chapel on Beech Street, which was afterward sold to the city, to be used as a schoolhouse. In 1873, a new church was erected on Belmont Street. This church has had nine pastors in forty years. The present pastor is Rev. Richard Otis Sherwood.

In 1890 - 91, the vestry of this church was used as a schoolroom for the three higher grades of the Morse School.

The Perkins Street Baptist Church, on Cross Street, was organized in 1845. In 1864, the building was enlarged, and two years later it was destroyed by fire. A new building soon took the place of the old one, and in 1873 was still further enlarged. In 1892, the congregation divided, a part remaining in the church on Perkins Street, and a part building another

edifice on Cross Street, but retaining the old name. In 1902, this building was partially burned, but in a few weeks it was ready for occupancy again. The present pastor is Rev. John R. Gow.

In 1854, the First Universalist Church was organized. The present building at the corner of Cross and Tufts Streets was built in 1869. In forty-three years this church has had only seven pastors. The present pastor is Rev. H. D. Maxwell.

In 1855, the First Methodist Episcopal Society in Somerville was started by a few persons, in Franklin Hall, near Union Square, under the charge of Rev. Rufus Gerrish. The present building on Bow Street was erected in 1874. It has the largest auditorium in the city, and the graduating exercises of the public schools are held here. The present pastor is Rev. George Skene.

Emmanuel Parish was organized in 1862, in a small hall over a tin-shop at the corner of Somerville Avenue and Park Street. Rev. N. G. Allen had charge of the first services.

The hall was afterward used as a school. In three instances in Somerville schools have followed churches.

In 1866, the building on the corner of Central and Summer Streets was occupied. The present rector is Rev. Nathan K. Bishop, who was installed in 1877.

In August, 1863, the Sunday-School connected with the Broadway Congregational Church was formed. In 1864, the church was organized, and a new building was dedicated, at the corner of Broadway and Central Street. In 1866, the building was destroyed by fire. In 1868, a new chapel was built on Sycamore Street. In 1871, another building was erected on the site of the first one. The church members divided in 1879. After the division the Broadway Congregational Church went to Sycamore Street. The present pastor is Rev. H. H. Leavitt.

The other members of the church now constitute the Winter Hill Congregational Church. The present pastor is Rev. Charles L. Noyes, who is an active member of the Asso-

ciated Charities and very much interested in the Stamp Saving System which has been recently introduced into the schools. The church has a fine stone building on the corner of Broadway and Central Street.

The Flint Street Methodist Church was organized in 1868, in the Tufts Street Chapel, then occupied as a place of worship by St. Thomas Parish. In July, 1871, a chapel was built on Flint Street, which served as a place of worship until the present building was erected. The pastor now is Rev. Philip Frick.

The Church of St. Thomas was built on Somerville Avenue in 1870, under the rectorship of Rev. George W. Durell, formerly rector of Emmanuel parish. The present rector is Rev. Silas B. Duffield.

The parish of St. James was organized as a Mission Chapel in 1875. The building was erected on Newbury Street, in 1876. In 1885, the building was moved to the corner of Broadway and Clarendon Avenue.

The Park Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church was formed in 1872, under the charge of

Rev. W. F. Lacount. In 1873, a chapel was built, and the first pastor, Rev. A. E. Winship, was installed. The present building was dedicated in 1883. It is situated on the corner of Elm Street and Park Avenue. The present pastor is Rev. Arthur Page Sharp.

The Broadway Methodist Church was formed in 1873, through the efforts of Rev. J. Benson Hamilton, pastor of the Flint Street Church. After some time the one-story brick building at the corner of Broadway and Marshall Street was erected by the society, and in this services were held until the new church building was erected on Broadway, in 1882. Within a few years this building has been removed to Grant Street, and enlarged and improved. The present pastor is Rev. George H. Clarke.

In 1874, the West Somerville Congregational Society was organized. In 1876, the present building was dedicated. The first pastor was Rev. C. L. Mills. Rev. E. E. Braithwaite is now pastor in charge. It is called the Day Street Church.

The West Somerville Baptist Church was

formed in 1874. The first settled pastor was Rev. J. R. Haskins. The present church was completed in 1890. The pastor now is Rev J. Vanor Garton.

September 15, 1853, the First Orthodox Congregational Society was legally organized. The church edifice on Franklin Street was dedicated in 1855. In 1867, this edifice was burned, and the present building on the original site was built in 1868. Rev. Benjamin Judkins was the first pastor. The present pastor is Rev. W. Sherman Thompson.

The Second Advent Society began holding meetings in 1878, and in 1879 a chapel was built on Bow Street at the junction of Somerville Avenue. Elder Charles Goodrich was the first pastor. In 1887, the society was incorporated, and the present chapel was built on Putnam Street. Rev. Charles W. Dockham is now the pastor.

In 1879, the Winter Hill Universalist Church was organized. In 1888, a church was built on the corner of Evergreen Avenue and Thurston



Street. The present pastor is Rev. Alonzo Francis Gray, formerly of Nashua.

In 1886, the Union Square Presbyterian Church was organized. The present church was purchased from the Congregational Society. It is situated on Warren Avenue. Rev. Lewis V. Price has recently resigned the pastorate.

In 1881, the Third Universalist Church was organized in West Somerville. In 1884, the church on the corner of Elm and Morrison Streets was completed. The present pastor is Rev. William Couden.

The East Somerville Baptist Church was organized in 1890. The building is on Perkins Street, opposite Pinckney Street. The first pastor was Rev. C. L. Rhoades. Rev. F. S. Boody, of Agawam, has just accepted a call to this church.

The Randall Memorial Baptist Church occupies an edifice on New Cross Street. This church has had six pastors since 1873. The present pastor is Rev. Welbee Butterfield.

The Highland Congregational Church was organized in 1894. In 1895, the new building

on Highland Avenue was dedicated. The church has had but one pastor, Rev. George S. K. Anderson.

In 1874, the Prospect Hill Congregational Church was organized. In 1876, the building on Warren Avenue was dedicated. In 1889, the handsome brick building on Bow Street was dedicated. This church has had but three pastors: Rev. A. E. Winship, Rev. Edward S. Tead, and Rev. Richard C. Woodbridge.

The Union Square Baptist Church holds its services in an attractive building on Walnut Street. This building was erected in 1896. Rev. C. S. Scott was the first pastor. Rev. W. B. C. Merry has just resigned the pastorate.

In 1881, the Winter Hill Baptist Church was organized. In fifteen years this church has had fifteen pastors. The first one was Rev. L. H. Abrams. Rev. W. J. Day resigned the pastorate June 7, 1903.

In 1881, St. Ann's Church was dedicated and Rev. John R. Galvin was installed as pastor. In 1894, the church was burned, but two months later the building was ready again for

divine service. St. Ann's now has a new building, one of the finest in the city.

In 1869, the Parish of St. Joseph was organized. For two years the congregation worshipped in Hawkins Hall. The present building was dedicated in 1874. Rev. C. T. McGrath is the pastor.

The Parish of St. Catharine was organized in 1891, and the chapel on Summer Street was dedicated in 1892. The pastor is Rev. James J. O'Brien, the son of the late Mayor Hugh O'Brien, of Boston.

The parsonage connected with this church was once the residence of Isaac Pitman, our first Librarian. A spacious greenhouse covered the present lawn. The flowers were sent to brighten many homes in Somerville and other places. Mr. and Mrs. Pitman were the centre of a cultivated and literary circle. John G. Whitier was a constant visitor. Lucy Larcom gave a series of talks on literature to the favored few. Men and women eminent in Cambridge and Boston frequently met there. Mrs. Harriet M. Laughlin, the daughter, was a member

of the School Committee for two years. Mrs. Pitman inherited the property from her brother, Charles Minot. In his will he left a fortune to a young friend. On the death of this young man the money became the property of Harvard College. For this reason the family received many privileges from the University.

## XXIII

### NEWSPAPERS

SINCE 1861, fifteen newspapers have been published in Somerville. The two which had the longest existence were the *Somerville Journal* and the *Somerville Citizen*.

The *Somerville Citizen* was started in 1888. Its office was in the Stickney Building on Pearl Street; later, it was moved to Gilman Square. It was an excellent paper, representing high ideals, and giving to its readers clean and interesting matter. It was united with the *Somerville Journal* in 1901.

The first number of the *Somerville Journal* was printed December 3, 1870. It represents all local interests, and is a welcome visitor in every household. The Woman's Page, conducted by Mrs. Barbara N. Galpin, contains

notices of women's clubs, household hints, fashions, and whatever may be interesting to women. The office is in the brick building, owned by the Somerville Journal Company, at 8 Walnut Street.

The *Somerville Reporter* has recently come under the management of Wesley P. Maynard. It is published in West Somerville.

## XXIV

### THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

THE Somerville Historical Society was organized in 1897, with Hon. Geo. A. Bruce as its first president. It was incorporated in 1898, with Charles D. Elliot as president. Its present president is John F. Ayer.

The headquarters are at the old Tufts homestead, No. 78 Sycamore Street. Stated meetings are held four times a year, and there are semi-monthly meetings, when essays and talks are given on historical subjects.

## XXV

### GREAT STORMS

BESIDES the storm that unroofed the Unitarian Church, Somerville has suffered from two other visitations of nature.

A writer in the *Radiator*, the High School paper, gives a graphic description of the storm of January 17, 1867. The High School was in the building now used as a City Hall. The upper part was the High School, and the lower room, a Grammar School.

It began to snow early in the morning, and the flakes were so fine and thick that the houses on one side of the street were hardly visible from the other side. Mr. Babcock, the Principal of the High School, commended the pupils for their punctuality and attendance on such a day.



Before the hour for closing the school, all but three of the children had been sent for. Twelve Grammar School children shared their lunch with the High School girls. The son of a neighbor brought provisions, and he, with two other neighbors and the janitor, kept guard during the night. Two teachers remained also. The boys and men occupied one room, and the girls another. Wraps were the only bed coverings, boots and umbrellas the only pillows. The next morning all but three of the children were taken away in sleighs, but owing to the high drifts many were unable to reach their homes, and were obliged to stop at the nearest house. The three who were left feared they might have to spend another night in the building. When the snow-plough came, the three girls followed it until it "stuck" in a drift. They went into the nearest house till a sleigh came for them. One of the girls lived on Belmont Street, the other two on Vine Street. They rode back past the High School to Union Square, then to Belmont Street, where they all expected to pass the night. No paths were shovelled, and

they stopped twice at different houses. In some places the drifts were from six to eight feet high. After supper the brother of the young girls who lived on Vine Street called for them. A path had been made across the field from Park Street. In this way, marching in single file, they reached their home without difficulty.

At the Spring Hill School there were only primary pupils, and when the hour for dismissal arrived anxious parents called for their children and were dismayed to see a white wall several feet high against the schoolhouse door. One energetic parent drove a grocer's team under one of the windows, and the little ones were handed out to him, and transferred to the arms of their parents. This happened before the days of the "No School" signal.

July 30, 1887, a small cyclone, a few feet in width, appeared in Somerville. It did little damage, except in one locality. Its greatest strength was exercised in its passage between Mrs. Frost's house and Mr. Raymond's house, on Laurel Street. It seized a large poplar-tree, the tallest one on the place, wrenched it from

its place, and flung it into the street. The roots of the fallen tree were twelve or fourteen feet long. It was so great a curiosity that photographs of it were made and distributed among friends.

“ A city set upon the hills,  
For all to see, like ancient Rome ;  
The one our classic memory thrills,  
The other speaks to us of home.

“ The one is old, and sad, and gray,  
The other is so bright and young,  
It seems as if 'twas in a day  
Our city into being sprung.

“ It stretches north, and east, and west, —  
The world is lying at our feet ;  
Each one believes his view the best,  
And makes the harmony complete.”

— *Martha Perry Lowe.*

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THE END.











